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Near East & South Asia

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Wednesday
31 July 1996

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Near East & South Asia

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International Affairs: Clinton Creates 'Unhealthy Atmosphere' at Terrorism Summit

MM3007154496 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 30 Jul 96 p 15

[Editorial: "The Paris Terrorism Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The interior and foreign ministers of the G-7 states and Russia are holding a one-day conference in Paris, aimed at examining ways of combating terrorism after the blast at the Atlanta Olympic Games and the suspicious mid-air explosion of the TWA plane.

Issues on the agenda include the exchange of intelligence, the training of police forces, the extradition of suspects, the tightening of surveillance on finance operations, and preventing terrorists from using the Internet to exchange messages and information.

President Bill Clinton created an unhealthy atmosphere when he sought, prior to the meeting, to highlight the U.S. view by calling for harsher sanctions against the countries which support terrorism, and singled out three Arab states, namely Iraq, Libya, and Sudan, in addition to Iran.

What is new in the terrorism issue is that it has reached the United States, which has always been immune from terrorist operations, first because of its remote situation, and [second] because, unlike Europe, it has no legacy of colonialism. However, U.S. domestic and foreign policies have removed this immunity, and we had the bombing of the New York World Trade Center, the Oklahoma bombing, and recently the explosive charge which spoiled the Atlanta Olympics.

Terrorism was always confined to the Middle East region, the European continent, and some other Third World states. U.S. foreign policies, with their total bias toward all types of Israeli terrorism and toward the region's undemocratic regimes, helped provide solid excuses for some groups which believe in using violence to target U.S. bases in Riyadh, Dhahran, and, earlier, Beirut.

It is paradoxical that the United States which has now proclaimed itself the leader of the fight against terrorism and which is demanding that it should top the priorities of the Western democracies as the number one enemy to their stability, should, over the past four years, have practiced and supported terrorism in one way or another.

The U.S. Administration, which believes the "Arab Afghans" to be a terrorist group, was their first and major sponsor for training and finance during their fight against the Communist regime in Afghanistan, and did not oppose their later move to Bosnia to fight the Serbian enemy.

The U.S. Administration supported the Nicaragua Contras with money and weapons until they were able to topple the Sandinista regime, and did not see any wrongdoing in its terrorist actions against the Managua government. The same can be said about its support for Savimbi's movement in Angola, and for all the Arab opposition movements trying to topple regimes which are neither Washington's allies nor within its sphere of influence.

It is normal that Washington should consider as terrorism only actions which threaten its allies in the Hebrew state. It believes Hizballah in southern Lebanon to be a terrorist organization and does not view the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon as a legitimate reason for resistance operations aimed at putting an end to it. The same can be said about the Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements in occupied Palestine.

In the U.S. view, Israeli planes are entitled to shell villages and residential areas in southern Lebanon and even Beirut, and can perpetrate any massacre they want in Qana or 'Ayn al-Hilwah. Also, there is nothing to prevent Israel's allies from carrying out the Sabra and Shatila massacres, since, as long as there are no Israeli or U.S. victims, the slaughter is legitimate and justified and the perpetrators do not deserve any punishment by the United Nations or the Security Council.

The Paris conference will make security decisions to confront political issues, but it will not succeed in putting an end to terrorism, unless it asks the U.S. Administration to adopt balanced foreign policies which would help bring about a genuine peace based on justice in the Arab region, instead of the bogus Israeli peace.

Islamic Affairs

Islamic Affairs: Islamic League Condemns Move To Let Jews Pray in al-Aqsa Mosque

LD2907170796 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1442 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mecca, 29 Jul — The General Secretariat of the Islamic World League has condemned in Mecca the decision of the Israeli Supreme Court to allow the members of an extremist Jewish sect to perform prayers in al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rocks.

In a statement it issued today, the league said that the decision of the Israeli Supreme Court was considered as an interference in Muslims' affairs and the affairs of al-Aqsa Mosque and was rejected as far as religion and law were concerned.

That decision is also in contradiction with the resolutions of the United Nations and the UN Security Council that called on Israel not to change anything in Holy Jerusalem.

The league recalled the similar decision that was adopted in the past by the Israeli court and that allowed Jews to pray in the Mosque of Abraham in the Palestinian city of Hebron and the subsequent Israeli authorities' division of the mosque by erecting an iron curtain between Muslims and Jews.

The Islamic World League considered that the decision to allow Jews to pray in al-Aqsa Mosque was only a prelude to seizing it completely. The league said that the implementation of the decision issued by the Israeli Supreme Court was considered as a defiance of Muslims' feelings and was a provocation to them.

The league called in its statement on international organizations to work for preventing the Israeli Government from implementing that hostile and unjust decision and to make all efforts for the abrogation of that decision and work for prompting the international community to prevent Israel from abusing the Islamic holy places.

Islamic Affairs: OIC Condemns Atlanta Bombing

LD3007130696 Rabat MAP in English
1243 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, July 30 (MAP) — The Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] condemned Monday [29 July] the bombing of the Olympic Park at Atlanta which killed 2 people and injured 111 others.

OIC Secretary General Hamid Algabid sent a message of condolences to US President Bill Clinton where he condemns the barbarous and coward act and express the Islamic organization determination to fight all forms of terrorism.

The OIC is sure that the U.S. Government and people will unveil authors of this odious act and will take the most severe sanctions against them, went on the message that was delivered to U.S. general consul in Jeddah.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Speaker Quray' Reportedly Resigns

JN3007165096 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1600 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nawfal] We are now trying to contact our correspondent in the occupied territories, Basim Abu-Sumayyah. We received a report on the resignation of Ahmad Quray', speaker of the Palestinian parliament, who confirmed a short while ago that he will resign following an argument with Yasir 'Arafat. Basim, I believe that you are on the line.

[Abu-Sumayyah] Yes, George.

[Nawfal] Basim, you must have heard the same report I heard. Can you confirm that Ahmad Quray' has resigned?

[Abu-Sumayyah] Indeed, Ahmad Quray' tendered his resignation to the Legislative Council members following an argument with President 'Arafat during the discussion on the constitution in today's session. The dispute was over who the draft constitution will be presented to and who will endorse it. A heated argument ensued, and President 'Arafat withdrew from the session. Later, Ahmad Quray' tendered his resignation to the council members. The council members and Ahmad Quray' are now discussing the legal grounds for his resignation.

[Nawfal] Basim, do you have any idea about the argument between Yasir 'Arafat and Ahmad Quray'? Was it really stormy?

[Abu-Sumayyah] It was a heated argument over who has the right to present, discuss, and endorse the constitution — the Legislative Council or the Authority. The argument was over this point.

[Nawfal] Do you think that this was the only reason for the argument, or were there other differences over certain issues between Yasir 'Arafat and Ahmad Quray'?

[Abu-Sumayyah] No, it was over the constitution only.

[Nawfal] Thank you, Basim.

Palestinian Affairs: Council Session Adjourns Following Quray-'Arafat Argument

JN3007202996 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
2000 GMT 30 Jul 96

[From the "Panorama" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' today tendered his resignation to the council members following a heated argument with President Yasir 'Arafat over the Palestinian constitution. Ahmad Quray's two deputies and the council's secretary general said they also plan to resign, thus forcing the council to adjourn its session until tomorrow.

'Arafat objected to the draft constitution that was presented for discussion. He asked council members to wait for a PLO committee to present a draft Palestinian constitution.

Several Legislative Council deputies believe that 'Arafat wants to closely supervise the drafting of the constitution so that it will not curtail the role of the executive branch. Council members also accuse the Palestinian president of trying to marginalize the role of the legislative branch.

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council To Resume Meeting Under Quray'

JN3107064896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Legislative Council will resume its 15th session in its first term in Bethlehem this morning chaired by Speaker Ahmad Quray' and attended by President Yasir 'Arafat. The council will pursue the discussion of the items listed on its agenda.

President Yasir 'Arafat attended part of the Legislative Council's evening session in Bethlehem yesterday, a session that was devoted to the discussion of the Basic Law, the interim constitution.

The session was a heated one, with discussions among several deputies on the mechanism of submitting and adopting the constitution by the legislative and executive branches.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Confirms PA's Assistance in Discovery of MIA's Body

TA3007165296 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 30 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement to our correspondent Fayiz 'Umar, Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat commented on the issue of Sa'adon.

[Begin recording] ['Arafat] There is no doubt that we offered very important assistance on this issue.

['Umar] Did the PA provide assistance to Israel in the discovery of the body of the soldier Ilan Sa'adon?

['Arafat] Yes.

['Umar] Today?

['Arafat] Over several days. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Official Expects Israel To Release Yasin

JN3107065696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sufyan Abu-Zayidah, director general of Israeli Affairs in the Planning and International Cooperation Ministry, said that the National Authority [NA], in a humanitarian gesture, helped in locating the body of Israeli soldier Ilan Sa'don, who was kidnapped approximately seven years ago.

Abu-Zayidah told Voice of Palestine that the NA expects a similar gesture from the Israeli side, which would take the form of the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, who is in an Israeli jail and whose health condition continues to deteriorate.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Speech Hails Martyrs, 'Ayyash

TA3007164296 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 28 Jul 96 p 5

[Report by Muhammad al-'Abid]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza, AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH — Yesterday, at the Shaykh Muhammad 'Awwad hall in Gaza, our masses hailed the 25th anniversary of the martyrdom of the two commanders Abu-'Ali Iyad [Walid Ahmad Nimr] and Abu-Sabri Saydam [Mamduh Sabri]. President 'Arafat and some members of the PLO Executive Committee, the Council of Ministers, the Legislative Council, the Palestine National Council, and a large number of citizens participated in the ceremony.

The president delivered a speech at the ceremony, in which he said: [Koranic verse omitted] Brothers, we celebrate today while bowing our heads in respect and reverence to those pious martyrs who fell on the road to Palestine and holy Jerusalem. Whether some like it or not, Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine. Yes, holy Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine whether they like it or not. Anyone who does not like it can drink from the Sea of Gaza. I say this not in my name, neither in the name of those brothers, not in the name of our Arab brothers from the Atlantic to the Gulf, not in the name of our Islamic nation, and not in the name of the Christian world only, but I also say it in the name of those pious martyrs who fell on the road to Jerusalem. Yes, on the road to Jerusalem, oh Abu-Sabri, oh Abu-'Ali Iyad. Yes, in the name of the martyrs who fell, from Ahmad Musa to the last martyr, Yahya 'Ayyash.

When we began, and I still remember those noble stands, without which the revolution would not have continued — those noble stands by the brother martyrs Abu-Sabri and Abu-'Ali Iyad, along with those of their brother martyrs — and I say this proudly, in your Fatah movement we do not say advance. Rather, our slogan was: follow us. Therefore, we follow those pious martyrs. We follow them, we follow them to Jerusalem because we said an independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital. Those who do not like this can drink from the Dead Sea.

The president said that this is not just a Palestinian call. This call was made even at the last meeting in Cairo, which brought the Arabs together for the first time in six years. This call was: An independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

He said: Our path is not easy at all and we are aware of this, but the good news is that the Cairo meeting was not an ordinary meeting, it restored unity and solidarity to our Arab nation after the Gulf crisis.

He added: I ask my brother the Moroccan ambassador to inform his majesty King Hassan II that we request an urgent meeting of the Jerusalem Committee and the executive committee of the Islamic Conference, or both of them together — this is up to him — in order to respond to their attempts at distorting the facts. This latest grave decision issued by the Israeli court permitting prayers on the al-Haram al-Sharif, I say no to them. This the first of two qiblahs, the first of two qiblahs, the first of two qiblahs. [Koranic verse omitted]

The president said that there are now numerous attempts to create the same problem that happened at the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque. The Jerusalem Committee met today on this decision to see what we can do in the face of this grave decision that seeks to turn al-Haram al-Sharif and the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque into a prayer area for Jews.

He added: We are not against Jews, but we will not allow onslaughts against our mosques and places of worship. Even if we the Palestinians were to allow this, neither the Arabs, the Muslims, nor the Christians would allow it. Therefore, I say we support a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace on all the Arab tracks — the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian tracks. There will be no just and comprehensive peace unless it is on all the Arab tracks.

He said that adherence to agreements must be by both sides, not by one side only.

He said that Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine. It is part of the territories occupied in 1967 to which Resolutions 242 and 338 apply, which are the basis and foundation of the Madrid peace conference. Land for peace, not security in return for peace.

The president stressed the need for the two sides to adhere to the agreements. He said: No one can hide the sun with his fingers. Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine. I tell my brother martyrs: Everything is cheap for the sake of Jerusalem. The pledge is the pledge, and the oath is the oath. We will continue until Jerusalem, until Jerusalem, until Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Speaks of Contacts With U.S. To Free Deputy

JN3007200796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A climate of anger and consternation permeated the evening session of the Legislative Council in the wake of the Israeli occupation authorities' arrest of Deputy 'Abbas Zaki. More details are contained in this report by Sa'id 'Ayyad in Bethlehem:

[Begin 'Ayyad recording] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat described the occupation authorities' arrest of deputy 'Abbas Zaki, member of the Legislative Council, as highly serious. The president indicated that the National Authority held urgent contacts with the European Troika and the U.S. Government and informed them of the seriousness of the incident. The president, who attended part of the evening session, reviewed the testimony of Zaki's escort on the arrest.

The council members condemned the arrest of Deputy Zaki. Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat described the arrest as an abduction. Deputy Hakam Bal'awi said that the Israeli Government is trying to create confusion on the Palestinian scene. He warned against Israeli plans to assassinate Palestinian leaders. 'Azzam al-Ahmad described the Israeli move as one that only befits gangs.

In a separate development, his excellency the president voiced opposition to the review of the Basic Law, the interim constitution, by the Legislative Council before it is presented by the head of state. The evening session was adjourned with the understanding that the Legislative Council will resume its meeting tomorrow morning. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Officials Warn of 'Bloodbaths' Over Israeli Policies

JN3007201296 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian officials today warned that the region will witness bloodbaths if Israel continues its settlement expansion policy in the Palestinian territories.

Justice Minister Furayh Abu-Middayn said that Israel's confiscation of our territories, waters, and future is considered a declaration of war against the Palestinian people. If Israel continues this policy, he said, it will lose peace, not only with Palestinians but also with the rest of the region's people.

Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' said that Israel is trying to undermine the peace process, that the Israeli Government's measures are a flagrant violation of the peace accords, and that Israel's continued confiscation of Palestinian territories will make us stop negotiations with it.

Deputy Ziyad Abu-Zayyad said that Israel's continued confiscation of land shows that it has no intention to reach peace between the two peoples.

Palestinian Affairs: PLO's 'Abbas Comments on 'Arafat-Fahd Talks

MM3007145296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Jul 96 pp 1, 4

[Report on interview with PLO Executive Committee secretary Mahmud 'Abbas by Wahib Muhammad Ghurab in Jeddah; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has stressed its willingness to do whatever it can to push the peace process in the Middle East forward. It also stressed its support for the Palestinian stand and its willingness to bolster Jerusalem's steadfastness. This stand was announced during the meeting between Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, who concluded a visit to Saudi Arabia yesterday. Prior to his departure, he met with Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, defense and aviation minister, and inspector general. They reviewed the most important developments on the Arab and international stages.

Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, has said that King Fahd told President Yasir 'Arafat that Saudi Arabia would exert its efforts, especially with the United States and other world states, to secure support for the Arab stand on Jerusalem.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT before President 'Arafat's departure from Jeddah, Abu-Mazin said that King Fahd told President 'Arafat that the Kingdom supports the Palestinians' demands. He added that Saudi officials always tell us: We support your demands, so tell us what you want and we will do what you want.

He described President 'Arafat's visit and talks with King Fahd as successful by any standard. Although visits to the Kingdom are normally successful, this visit has been the most successful of all.

On the results of the talks on Jerusalem and reports that President 'Arafat will ask Saudi Arabia to intervene with the United States regarding recent Israeli measures, Mahmud 'Abbas said: Let me be frank with you: The custodian of the two holy mosques told President 'Arafat: We will exert efforts with the United States in particular or with other states for the sake of supporting the Arab stand on Jerusalem. It was his own initiative.

He ['Abbas] added: The Kingdom expressed full willingness to bolster Jerusalem's steadfastness and to support efforts to preserve its Arab and Islamic identity, and this includes the financial support pledged by the Kingdom and its political and diplomatic activities in international and Arab forums.

Asked about the results of the Saudi-Palestinian talks with regard to convening the Jerusalem Committee, the Executive Committee secretary said: The issue was discussed, President 'Arafat briefed King Fahd on the results of his contacts with King Hassan of Morocco and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in this connection, and King Fahd expressed his support for these efforts and his willingness to pave the way for such a meeting.

Abu-Mazin said that President 'Arafat discussed with King Fahd the situation in the wake of the Israeli elections and the efforts the Kingdom should make at the Arab and international levels to bolster the political process, especially on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Abu-Mazin pointed out that the two sides also discussed bilateral issues and the Kingdom's continued support for the Palestinian people. He said: We were happy because the visit was an opportunity to reassure ourselves about the health of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz.

Asked whether 'Arafat discussed the question of opening the Kingdom's doors to Palestinian workers, the Palestinian official said: This issue was addressed during the previous visit and this visit, and the Kingdom said that the Palestinians are more entitled to be on the Kingdom's territory than anyone else. Thus some technical matters such as the passport issue and other facilities were discussed. Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, who attended the meeting, expressed his full willingness to provide all the necessary facilities.

Abu-Mazin said that 'Arafat's visit to the Kingdom was aimed at consulting with King Fahd after the successful Cairo Arab summit and listening to his opinion and advice on the important political actions on which we are going to embark. The president briefed King Fahd on the latest developments in the situation on the Palestinian scene since the summit and the meetings he held with the Syrian president and the French and Israeli foreign ministers. We explained to King Fahd the Israeli position which we heard from the Israeli foreign minister and the matters on which we agreed with the Israelis, in particular the formation of negotiation committees, and we are now waiting for Israel to name its members so that we can name ours and enable the committees to begin negotiations over two points: the issues remaining from the transitional phase and the resumption of the final phase.

Abu-Mazin pointed out that the Kingdom expressed its willingness to support the Palestinian stand in continuation of its constant support represented in the financial and economic support and diplomatic efforts with world states, especially with the cosponsors of the [Madrid] conference, Europe, and Japan.

He stressed that the Kingdom is working to get the blockade and the suffering lifted from the Palestinian people.

Asked about President 'Arafat's meeting with President al-Asad, Abu-Mazin said: Actually the visit to Latakia was arranged on the periphery of the recent Cairo Arab summit, and without doubt Egypt played a positive role in the meeting between brother Yasir 'Arafat and President al-Asad to dispel the clouds in the atmosphere between the two sides. And the clouds were indeed dispelled and it was agreed for Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] to visit Damascus. The visit took place after a long period of estrangement, and we believe that it is a good start to restoring the Palestinian-Syrian relationship to its normal status. We care about this relationship and are, of course, keen — within the framework of Arab solidarity — to have good relations with all brothers. It is a good start on which the future will be built.

Asked whether the U.S. coordinator brought anything new with him during his recent visit, Mahmud 'Abbas said: The U.S. coordinator brought with him confirmation of the previous U.S. stands, namely its support for the continuation of the peace process, its rejection of Israel's claim that a unified Jerusalem is Israel's eternal capital, its rejection of settlement activities, its rejection of the blockade imposed on the Palestinians, and its rejection of the refusal to release prisoners. The U.S. coordinator is for the full implementation of the Oslo agreement, whether with regard to the outstanding issues from the transitional phase or other issues, hence his full rejection of any change to the foundations on which the agreements were based. Some people in Israel want to change, alter, or reinterpret this agreement. The United States rejects this position — a stand which we can register for it.

Asked whether the meeting with the Israeli foreign minister reflected a change in the Israeli position, a change different from the hard-line stand announced during the elections or during Netanyahu's visit to the United States, the Palestinian official said: I say that we sensed a change in tone and language. Without doubt what we heard was much less than what was announced in the United States or during the election campaign. However, I prefer to wait until we see whether the moderate tone we heard is on its way to implementation.

Asked about the time needed to form an opinion of Israel's new policy, he said: Frankly, that could take some time, because the Israeli Government is either reading the files or playing for time. However, there will be some excuses from the Israelis for not speeding up the process. Thus we fear that they might waste some time before they implement the remaining agreements, since numerous agreements need to be implemented.

On his assessment of the situation in Jerusalem after the Israeli High Court's recent decision, he said: We are very concerned that the situation in Jerusalem might explode, and it could explode, because that unjust and unfair decision, which allows the Jews to pray in the al-Aqsa Mosque, will be confronted by force [bi al-quwwah], and the Palestinian people will not allow those prayers to be practiced in the al-Aqsa Mosque. Thus there will be clashes, and I fear that the situation might become more and more tense. No one knows the outcome unless the Israeli court backtracks on this decision, which we believe is unjustifiable and a major obstacle to the peace process.

Asked whether he expects Israel to backtrack on the decision, Abu-Mazin said: I do not know. But whether or not they backtrack on it, we will not accept this decision. Frankly, the Palestinian people will reject it by all means.

On Egyptian-Palestinian coordination before President Mubarak's visit to the United States, Abu-Mazin said: There is permanent coordination, and the required position is for the United States to work to get the Israelis to adhere to the peace process. We are not demanding more than compliance with what was agreed. So our position is clear and strong, and our Egyptian brothers are fully espousing this position. And it has become clear that the tone of Netanyahu's voice has changed a lot compared with what it was during his visit to Washington, thanks to the strong and decisive Egyptian stand on the questions raised between the two countries.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Terms Saudi, Yemen Visit 'Very Important'

JN3007174296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 30 Jul 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat said his visit to Saudi Arabia and Yemen was positive and very important.

In statements he made upon arrival at the Presidential Offices in Gaza after attending the graduation of the Independent State of Palestine Class of the youth summer camps today, 'Arafat said his talks with Saudi and Yemeni officials were positive and important and will help strengthen the Arab march.

[Begin 'Arafat recording] The results were positive and very important. They will help strengthen the Arab march, especially following the Arab summit in Cairo and the important activities on all levels so that our Arab nation can face all the challenges and developments with a strong will under this new world order. This new world order should not be achieved at the expense of the Arab nation or its future generations. We must participate in this new world order on equal footing for the sake of our children and the future and dignity of this Arab nation.

Also, during this tour, I briefed my brothers on the circumstances and difficulties we are facing, including the embargo and the failure to implement, precisely and sincerely, what was agreed upon. We agreed to continue our Arab and Islamic contacts, and our contacts with the world, including the conference cosponsors, the United States and Russia, the EU, the UN Security Council permanent members, Japan, the African states, and the nonaligned states in order to maintain the regional peace process. Because peace is not a Palestinian or Arab demand, but an Israeli and world demand. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The president stressed that peace in the Middle East is the pillar for world peace.

President 'Arafat arrived home today from Yemen, which he visited during a tour that took him also to Saudi Arabia.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Official on Abu-Marzuq, Peace Process

TA3007185996 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 28 Jul 96 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS — Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has stressed that the U.S. authorities' continued detention of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, the former Hamas Political Bureau head, which is entering its second year, serves the Israeli Government. It noted that his detention is not based on any violation of the law. In a statement to QUDS PRESS, Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas representative in Jordan, said that in the case of Abu-Marzuq's arrest, we are convinced that this is a political rather than a legal issue. He asserted that "Dr. Abu-Marzuq did not commit any political or legal offense against the United States."

Nazzal added that the possibility that the U.S. authorities will extradite the head of the Hamas Political Bureau "remains valid," but he did not rule out the possibility that the United States will keep Dr. Abu-Marzuq in custody in its jail "as a card to pressure Hamas."

Regarding the future of the peace process in the region and the dangers that threaten it after the right-wing assumed power in Israel, Nazzal emphasized that Hamas was not optimistic about "the future of the peace process in the region during the era of former Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, and even less so in the era of current Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu." It is his impression "there is agreement by the two parties on the strategy with regard to the Palestinian people's rights."

The Hamas official ruled out the possibility that the current peace process will lead to "stability and security among the countries and people of the region." He pointed to the hard-line statements by Israeli officials "which stem from the law of the jungle where the strong impose what they want without taking into consideration the rights of others." Nazzal said that "the crux of the conflict lies in the presence of the continuing occupation. The proposed solutions reinforce the continuation of the occupation, but in a different form." Nazzal lauded the moves by the Arab countries of the region, which are aimed at achieving Arab rapprochement, coordination, and solidarity to pressure Israel to observe Arab and Palestinian national rights. At the same time, Nazzal did not believe that last Thursday's [25 July] visit to Syria by President Yasir 'Arafat will affect the future of the presence of the Palestinian opposition factions there. He said: 'Arafat's visit to Damascus will not change their programs or positions, which are based on firm bases and foundations in opposing the peace settlement.

Palestinian Affairs: PNC Condemns Israeli Court Ruling on Temple Mount Prayer

TA3007181696 Ramallah AL-AYYAM in Arabic 30 Jul 96 p 3

[Received via internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ramallah, AL-AYYAM — The Palestine National Council [PNC] speaker's office considers the Israeli high court's decision to allow hard-line Jewish groups to enter the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard a grave precedence that brings to mind the series of measures and decisions that ended in the division of al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

In a statement that the office issued yesterday, it added that the ruling clearly shows that the conspiratorial intention to gradually nibble at the Palestinians' lands and rights does not desist even from targeting the holiest shrines of the Arabs and Muslims, including the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque.

The statement says that the ruling constitutes a violation of the resolutions of the United Nations and of numerous international institutions, including UNESCO, which considers Arab Jerusalem an occupied area. Moreover, the ruling is considered a violation of the Oslo agreements, which forbid the adoption of any measures that will lead to a change in the city's status quo or which might affect the results of the final stage talks.

In its statement, the PNC speaker's office warned against the attempt to "exploit the imbalance and strength of power to fabricate history and impose new realities." It stressed that "peace and security cannot be achieved by violating the rights of others and desecrating their holy sites."

The PNC speaker's office called for an Arab-Islamic posture that will stop the Israeli infringement of rights and put an end to aggression against holy shrines. It called on Arab, Islamic, and friendly parliaments to raise their voices in solidarity with Jerusalem and its holy sites and reject these measures.

The PNC speaker's office called on Arab governments to halt "any form of normalization with the Israeli side as long as the Israeli Government does not fulfill the commitments it signed in the peace agreements, and as long as it does not adhere to international legitimacy's resolutions, which are the terms of reference of those agreements."

Algeria

Algeria: 1 Killed, 4 Injured in Explosion at Algiers Cafe

LD3007121996 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1130 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been another bomb attack in a cafe. It happened this morning at 0730 on Bou Bella Avenue, in Bab El Oued [Algiers]. The cafe manager was killed in the blast and four other people were injured. The emergency services and security forces rushed immediately to the scene to evacuate the injured.

[Paris France-Inter Radio in French on 30 July at 1300 GMT adds: "Two people were reportedly killed and several injured in the bomb attack carried out in Algiers this morning, according to a latest toll. The bomb exploded in a cafe in the working class district of Bab El Oued. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack."]

Algeria: Security Forces Kill 7 Armed Islamists, Seize Bombs

LD3107103696 Paris Radio France International in French 1000 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, seven armed Islamists were killed by the security forces in Blida on 28 July. That is what the daily EL WATAN has reported. During the operation, police seized nine homemade bombs and destroyed a chemical laboratory. Police in Blida defused 10 bombs or so within a week.

Algeria: Zeroual Appoints New Security Adviser

LD2707155996 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1300 GMT 27 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President of the republic Liamine Zeroual has appointed General Ahcene Bendjelti [formerly adviser in charge of security in the High State Council set up on 14 January 1992 after the interruption of the electoral process] as adviser for security affairs at the presidency of the republic.

Moreover, President Zeroual has accepted the resignations of Khatib Youcef, political adviser at the presidency and Mebarek Serai, technical adviser to the presidency of the republic.

Algeria: Zeroual Appoints, Transfers, Dismisses Governors

LD2707160696 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Liamine Zeroual today made a number of new appointments, transfers, and dismissals in the rank of governors.

As far as the new appointments were concerned, he appointed Youcef Daara, Noreddine Badaoui, Miloud Taheri, and Abdelkader Medane respectively governors of Chlef, Sidi Bel-Abbes, M'sila, and Tissemsilt.

As far as the transfers were concerned, he transferred Brahim Boubrik, Rachid Fatmi, Mohamed Saidani, Mohamed Taraie, Mohamed Kebir Rafaa, Abdeaziz Ourath, and Abdelkader Zoukh respectively to the governorates of Jijel, Skikda, Medea, Ouargla, Tindouf, Mila, and Ain Temouchent.

Habchi Kebir, Benlaribi Kadri, Abdelhafid Merabet, Mohamed Abdelnassir Benmihoub, and Mourad Bouslama were dismissed from their posts as governors of Algiers, Jijel, Skikda, Sid Bel-Abbes, and Mila.

President Liamine Zeroual also made a number of appointments and dismissals in the rank of public prosecutors and judges. More details in our later news bulletins.

Algeria: Radio Reports Clinton's Statements to New Ambassador

LD3007135396 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The reforms proposed by the president of the republic [Liamine Zeroual] have received the support and backing of U.S. President Bill Clinton. Washington has thus reiterated its support for Mr. Liamine Zeroual's invitation for reconciliation, dialogue, freedom of the press, and political openness. Over to Djamila Mezoued for more details on the statements made by the U.S. President:

[Mezoued] We will continue to support and encourage President Liamine Zeroual's invitation for reconciliation, dialogue, freedom of the press, and further political openness. This is the statement made by U.S. President Bill Clinton when he received the letters of credentials of Ramtane Lamamra, the new Algerian ambassador to the United States, yesterday in Washington.

Bill Clinton said that a political solution would ensure the success of the program of economic reforms. He added that while Algeria is moving toward national dialogue and a national conference this summer, the United States is closely following the signs showing that the policy of association adopted by President Liamine Zeroual will lead Algeria toward democratic pluralism, national reconciliation, and finally civil peace and economic prosperity.

When talking about the phenomenon of terrorism, the U.S. President said that this phenomenon today remains one of the major concerns for governments.

As regards bilateral relations, the U.S. President said that their roots are deeply embedded in history, adding that two centuries ago Joel Barlot, President George Washington's personal envoy, signed the first bilateral agreement with Algeria. President Clinton went on to say that since then the Algerian leaders have given their assistance to the Americans, the best example being the mediation of Algerian diplomats for the release of U.S. hostages in Iran in 1981.

For his part, Ramtane Lamamra, the new Algerian ambassador to the United States, highlighted the historical ties between the two countries and said that the values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and a market economy were endorsed by the people on 16 November 1995 on the occasion of the first multiparty presidential elections in their history. Mr. Lamamra added that President Zeroual brought together all the forces of the Algerian nation around the ideals of national reconciliation and dialogue with a view to completing the building of the country's institutions through free and democratic elections. He also said that this endeavor, which falls within the framework of the constitution and the laws of the republic, will develop in the next few months to reinforce the foundations of a state which will guarantee its continuity and guarantee a normal life for the Algerians.

As regards the process of national recovery launched by Algeria, the Algerian ambassador in Washington said that the contribution of the Algerian people [to this process] is apparent every day through their support for President Zeroual's program, their efforts in facing up to the difficulties of the transitional period leading up to a market economy, and also through their resistance to terrorism.

Algeria: Council To Discuss Strategies To Attract Foreign Investment

LD2807180096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 28 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mustapha Mekideche, secretary general of the General Union of Public Contractors, today announced that the National Economic and Social Council will convene early next month to discuss the five-year strategy aimed essentially at attracting foreign investments. As a member of the council, Mekideche told the daily AL-KHABAR that the discussions will focus mainly on the real objectives of this strategy, which, he said, relies on attracting foreign investment as the means available in the country are not sufficient. This, he added, requires firm and encouraging policies in all sectors in order to attract foreign capital. The council will also discuss ways of promoting nonhydrocarbon exports through sound and effective policies in this strategic area.

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS2907102796 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 23 Jul 96

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe"; quotation marks as received — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Editorial:

He who is not fit to enter History through the "big door" is doomed to leave by the "back one"!

It is commonly accepted that, from the beginning of the armed confrontation in 1992 up to the November 1995 election, a Junta composed of handful of well known army Generals was fully responsible for the Algerian situation and its development as far as people and History are concerned. However and from that date on, the collective responsibility was sized down to that of an individual, General Zeroual who has accepted it solemnly in front of the Algerian people.

The record of what, during his elections, the military regime propaganda almost called him "the providential General De-Zeroual, the one and only one who will take Algeria out of her misery", is simply not brilliant since the day he was put "on the power chair". Since his acceptance the position as the military regime first responsible, Algeria has counted a conservative figure of 40,000 death toll increase. That is, the number of dead resulting from the bloody conflict has more than doubled during the reign of General Zeroual. While six hundreds or so of prisoners were released as a part of image brightening operation, more than 60,000 political prisoners are still held under unhuman conditions with more than 18,000 without trial for periods exceeding five years for some. One out of three of those prisoners was arrested during the reign of General Zeroual. The most outrageous mass killings inside prisons such as that of Serkadji, Beroughia and El Harrach was done under his leadership and international human rights organisations are still refused access to investigate those shameful mass murders. As for the social and economical situation, Algeria has never descended into chaos with such speed as it has done since the advent of General Zeroual. Algeria macro-economic situation has been tighten further with few billions U.S. dollars foreign debt, thus "squeezing" to the extreme limits her chances to be "back on her feet". One in every 4.5 US $ billions of foreign debt accumulated during the past 34 years was contracted during General Zeroual 3 years reign. While the traces of previous debt can still be seen in the form of concert infrastructure, those contracted lately seems to be "invisible" if they were ever used in Algeria. General Zeroual will be remembered as the one under which the Algerian people have reached the highest degree of atomization and internal antagonism. While before, the different political tendencies within the Algerian society were able to debate issues peacefully even inside the same family unite, the reign of General Zeroual was that of general suspicion therefore of general political lethargy except for unrepresentative "associations of political type" working for the interest of the regime which were allowed to "dance in front of country mass media" for the Algerian people to see and hear.

These are some aspects of the impact, the reign of General Zeroual had on Algeria and the Algerian people so far, but according to all his ministers and representative, the actual chaotic situation is simply the fault of "terrorism" and the "IMF".

Last week General Zeroual has made a "historical gesture" in "solemnly" declaring: "the FIS file is closed". There are words that can change history and General Zeroual's declaration seems to be one of them. Algeria will never be the same again!

As for the FIS, the message has been clearly and loudly received! However, the FIS still persists in saying it will remain an unavoidable shaper of Algeria's future. The rhythm at which governments and heads of the military regime have been changes since the formation of the FIS is a tangible proof for those who wants to see reality. The "official" acknowledgement or not of the FIS is irrelevant compared to the free popular choice. So the fear motivated General Zeroual's "historical decision" can only reassure the FIS of its popularity. It is only taken as a decision for the military regime to avoid another December 1991 defeat.

The Algerian street seems to have tune its violence to General Zeroual historical decission. The propaganda machine is trying to minimising it by telling people that the timing is just a coincidence and that the real raison behind all this is a dispute, the leader of the GIA is having with some of his lieutenants. As for the criminal random massacre against the civilians, it is the work of the "official SM" (secret police) which is trying to show that General Zeroual policy of exclusion is "politically correct" and justified, since the FIS is "waving an indiscriminate war against the Algerian people" as the propaganda machine is saying.

As some were expecting General De-Zeroual to enter Algerian History through its "big door", signs are pointing that he will rather go out from its back door and the sooner the better for the Algerian people!

Algeria: a crucial rendezvous with History!

Algeria at this very moment is living an intense moment that has some similarity with two important events which took place in her recent history.

The first events is related to vital decisions of a historical importance that the political class has to take vis a vis the regime "project". This situation is similar in many aspects to the situation of early weeks of independence. In those days the Algerian people came to know to what extend some of their countrymen can go in their graving for power. The "psychological environment" was such that the people did not too much care about who will come to power and how, because they were really tired of the seven years of war. So in general the Algerian people did not participate in elaborating Algeria's "first few steps". The gradual surrender of the Algerian people and the political class to the growing dictatorship has had a devastating effect for the rest of thirty years or so. A monstrous system was established which has corrupted every sphere of the social life. As the political class was either absorbed into the system or pushed underground, the Algerian people turned back to their "long time habit" of periodical revolts and uprisings. The general feelings amongst the people is still formulated in: "why have we let them take us to this?!". The Algerian political class concerned by General Zeroual's "project" can be categorised into three different groups:

1) A group which is known to do everything and anything to get to power. Amongst them are parties which helped out giving some kind of "respectability" and "legitimacy" to the elections of General Zeroual in last November. They were all the time, harshly criticising those who have boycotted the elections, saying that they have made a wrong political decision. However, as time is going by and revelations about the elections untold stories are coming to the surface, these parties are trying their best to get closer to the "bad parties" which boycotted the elections of General Zeroual. Sometimes this "self-granted familiarity" is pushed to the limits of the ridicule and self-humiliation. For example, one of the pro-boycott party (FFS) had to publish a communique in the newspapers saying in its substance :"we do not know this so called Said Saadi who is going about, saying to everyone that he is one of our acquaintances and that we had a meeting with him!". Said Saadi is the president of the RCD, a party which "helped out" in the elections of General Zeroual. Said Saadi was asked about the "incident" on national TV which incidently has given him far more hours than

any other personality of political party representative except the military regime propaganda minister Mihoubi himself who, as some other do in other sectors, is taking advantage of his position in order to promote his own image for perhaps an eventual political future. Saadi's answer was something like :"I do not see why this polemic because as I was in El Djazair hotel a journalist asked me...and I told him... and he told me!". "La Boulangerie SM" wants him to lead a cake called "the democratic pole"! The political parties of the "16 November" have been spoiled by the regime and no mater how hard they try to "radicalise" their discourse to charm the Algerian people, this will not wash away all the obvious stains left over from their "cohabitation" with the regime. Some may remark that,it is exactly what the military regime wants. It wants the parties to concentrate in fighting themselves while leaving the first responsible of the Algerian tragedy in peace. On has only to agree on that, but when some of the "16 November" parties make their fight against other parties a declared or hypocritically concealed objective in a "task distribution" tactics of an alliance evolving around the regime, one can only add the following: It has been reported that Nahnah the president of Hamas has asked for some of the FIS members to be included in the General Zeroual's "project" because "apparently" they are also Algerians. He has been even reported to have said in an other occasion that his selection of "these FIS members" should be based on wether they have "blood on their hands or not"! So according to Nahnah, some of the FIS members could be decent people in which case General Zeroual should give them charity by inviting them to his table. This double talk typical to Nahnah and in which he tries to seduce the FIS grassroots in making them believe that he is the only one who have spoken about the FIS (as if the FIS needed somebody to do it for it) while in reality he is viciously trying to undermine the unity of the FIS. How many time has Nahnah "offered" to the "good guys" of the FIS to dissociate themselves from the FRONT's "bad guys" and to do this PUBLICLY. If this is not a part of the regime "psychological war" against the FIS then what is? The Nahnah's same style can even be seen when he tries to "oversee" social protests in order to "suffocate" it as is the case today of the Algerian airline "Air Algerie" case. Didn't his newspaper of Monday 22/08/96 had its biggest front page headline as: "The pilots Union (syndicate) of "Air-Algerie" accepts the dialogue with the administration!". From a superficial reading, Nahnah is the one who worries about "Air Algerie" pilots strike, but a close look will reveal that he is portraying the Administration as the wise guy and praise be to Allah, the Union has come to its senses and have accepted the civilised way of solving problems that is with dialogue. Dialogue with the corruption, dialogue with the dictatorship, dialogue with the torturers, dialogue with everyone except...the "criminals" who took arms against all of the above.

If one person can do some good to the FIS by not talking about it, it is undoubtedly Nahnah who have been stabbing the back of the Islamic Front since its foundation in 1989.

2) The second group of political parties consists of those who have decided to enter the "battle field" of politics and ideas by putting aside the crucial question of the Algerian tragedy: the legitimacy of power and the mechanisms of getting to it and leaving it. Some parties in this group are ready to call "legitimate" any "illegitimacy" that call itself "legitimacy". It is the politics of "Kiss the dog from its mouth until you get what you want from it" as the Algerian popular adage goes. The general argument of this group is that any available parcel of social and political sphere should be occupied and not left to the parties of the "minorities" to shape Algeria's future as they have been "infecting" every domain of the Algerian life since the military coup d'Etat of January 1992.

The risk here is that the falling of the regime will undoubtedly drag them with it as the common Algerian man under conditions of revolt will certainly not be able to see nuances and shades but only black and white, good guys and bad guys, the inside the system and the outside!

The propaganda machine, in order to minimise this kind of foresight in the mind of people, is trying to demonstrate that the Algerian street has been and will remain passive to General Zeroual's historical decision of "closing the FIS file". Not only the street is reacting but also all spheres of the Algerian people life are also reacting in one way or another. Only two newspapers have reacted with "euphoria" to the General's decision. The same newspapers of the same clans who have called for the military intervention after the first election results and the same newspapers who have promised their readers the end of the nightmare and that Algeria was at last going to see the "end of the tunnel". That was in January 1992! They have irresponsibly lied to the Algerian people as five of the most horrible years of Algeria's recent history has followed that coup d'Etat. Today, they are only repeating the same song but most people have already developed some kind of immunities against these "editorialists" wrong judgements as they are most of the time of an irrational nature following traumatic personnel experience such as coming face to face with death for example, when it is not simply a part of the military regime propaganda machine aimed as misleading the people.

3) The third group consists of political parties which are ready to "walk" a certain distance with the regime as long as they remain convinced that the direction it is taking goes into solving once and for all the origin of the Algerian problems that is the legitimacy of power and the mode to access it and to leave it! Realism is not absent from this group as the parties know that the issue of power is now more complicated than what it was three decades ago. If the "crushing by force" of the popular verdict during the elections of December 91 has added to the complexity of the legitimacy issue, the actual bloodshed has pushed everything else to second position. Tackling the issue of bloodshed will absolutely lead to "politics" and the role of the "unavoidable antagonist", the real victim of "political injustice". As the regime lacks of political will to end the bloodshed for divers raisons including that of giving itself a certain freedom to work well outside legality and morality to oppress the Algerian people on the pretext of "fighting terrorism". The regime has never wanted the political parties to have a say on the ongoing bloodshed as if they have no right to do so. So what the military regime has to do is just call the winner of the popular verdict, a terrorist organisation, tell the other political parties "hands off the issue" and wave a war of eradication against the "terrorists" who refuse it legitimacy! Accepting the logic of the "fait accompli" is a dangerous precedent with tremendous consequences for the future of Algeria!

However given the financial state of the regime and some external pressures "inviting" the military men to "broaden the political base", those parties were able to "force" the regime to include the crucial point of "how to stop the bloodshed" a point of discussion in the General Zeroual's "project". However, this important point at which all Algerians are looking at, was placed in the same category as changing some rules in the electoral law. This can only be another of the regime manoeuvres to dilute real issues into a set of inappropriate if not irrelevant ones.

One hope for Algeria and the Algerian people that the political parties of the second and third group do not give up on principles by modifying "one's history book" to suit that of the regime. An illegitimacy should not be transformed to legitimacy by ways of some kind of obscure trading on the back of the Algerian people. Giving up to the regime on principles poses serious problems about the future of Algeria as this phase risks to be remembered as that where "the legitimacy of force" was formally institutionalised and recognised as a serious alternative for acceding to power and remaining there. Because if that happen, then: — On what moral ground can the political class reject the "legitimacy" of any future coup d'Etat against any future real of false legitimacy after having accepting the first one? — On what moral ground can the political class reject the "legitimacy" of a movement that comes to power in defeating with arms the actual regime and which will then have enough ideological arguments to impose and for a long time, a monolithic political life exclusively based on "who did what and why, and who did not, since January 92" just as this regime has based its for three decades?

It will indeed, be opening dangerously the door wide open to Force and Violence as an acceptable means of change if not the only serious one! — The second similarity which the actual Algerian situation has with the recent past, is related to the euphoria of some of the so-called independent press which, on such occasions have always reveal what clan in the power circles, they are "dependant" on. Their reactions and writings are the same as that when they welcomed the coup d'Etat. They mislead the people by saying that everything is going to be alright now that the "good regime" have eradicated the "bad fundamentalist, terrorist, FIS". Last time when they said "it will soon be over", it was the beginning of five years bloody war that still has not said its last word. These newspapers have said to their readers that the FIS was finish as a result of a Junta ex-interior minister "closing the FIS file" and banning it. They ought to known that the FIS is not a file and that the minister of interior in question is now rotting in the History dustbin and the FIS is still a tangible reality. The FIS is a very long lasting idea and ideal related to those first days of independence. The FIS is the Algerian people taking the false civilian veil from the regime to expose its naked military reality. The FIS is the Algerian people shouting to the military regime: "yes you can steal from us as long as it is done discreetly, we even pretend not to know as we have not protested against the 99.99 percent of favourite votes your presidents have always had. We had no means to check your lies and we were not interested in doing so. Our unity and that of the country were far more important than your cheap cheating. But in January 1992, it was different! You have as usually stolen from us but this time you had no manners. You did it openly without respect and for this we can not let you get away with it because we will not be able to look at ourselves in the mirror again nor will we be able to look at Algeria history in the eyes! Letting you get away with it is like "spiting" on the known and unknown heroes of the Algeria's history and on her martyrs of today and yesterday!"

The FIS is that historical injustice which has become a source from which is eradiating the actual struggle and from which many other future movements against injustice will come to "refuel" their fighting spirit until final victory against those who may think of themselves as semi-Gods that have in their hands the life and death of others as well as the mercy or ruthlessness over them.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak-Clinton News Conference Discuss Middle East Relations

NC3007210596 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1910 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Washington, 30 July—[passage omitted] The following is the text of the proceedings of the news conference Presidents Mubarak and Clinton held at the White House today: [passage omitted]

President Mubarak delivered the following address after President Clinton finished his address: Once again, we meet here in the White House in an atmosphere of friendship and cordiality. The warmth of your reception was matched by the spirit of mutual understanding and goodwill which prevailed during our talks. We dealt with a wide range of issues of common interest. Our views were similar on many of these issues. We are pleased with the level of cooperation we have reached in the various fields. Our relationship has never been more solid and stable. Much credit goes to you, Mr. President, and your administration.

We discussed in depth our joint quest for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, a region so vital to countries all over the world, especially the United States. As in the past, we agree on the basic requirements of this peace. First and foremost, a just and fair peace must be based on the formula that was proposed by the co-sponsors of the Madrid Conference on Peace in the Middle East held in October 1990 and that was accepted by all parties. The essence of this formula is represented by Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, the land-for-peace principle, and the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people. These points of reference are the solid base for the peace process. Hence, all parties must adhere to them. All activities that are inconsistent with the requirements and spirit of peace, such as settlement activities and the seizure of land, should be terminated. What is needed now is to continue the strict implementation of the signed agreements. Negotiations should also be resumed on the various tracks without delay. All the Arab leaders meeting in Cairo last month reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the cause of peace. Their strategic decision was to uphold and continue the peace process. This has not happened for 50 years.

We know that the issue of Jerusalem is a sensitive and complicated one that does not lend itself to simple solutions. It is charged with emotions for all the parties. However, it is not impossible, in our view, to work out an imaginative solution that would be acceptable to all sides in the course of the negotiations. As I told President Clinton, I discussed these and other issues at length with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. I hope that he will move forward during the coming crucial months by taking the practical steps necessary to maintain the peace momentum.

We are all quite aware of the dangers that could surface if the peace process is frozen or suffers a setback. No party could benefit from this prospect. Despite the differences we had in our talks over certain issues, I feel that we can continue our dialogue to promote peace. The continuation of an active U.S. role is vital for the success of our efforts. President Clinton has reaffirmed to me the continuation of this role since he gives the highest priority to achieving a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace. He also has assured me that the U.S. policy regarding the terms of reference of the negotiations and the substantive aspects will remain unchanged. The United States strongly supports the land-for-peace principle because this concept is considered a pivotal foundation crowning our efforts and strategy with success.

In this respect, the Middle East economic conference to be held in Cairo gains a special significance. This conference will convene relying on the momentum of the political and economic transformations that are taking place in the Middle East. The United States shares our serious interest in preserving security and stability in the Middle East. In our opinion the best means to guarantee this is to establish a just and lasting peace that meets with genuine acceptance and approval of the peoples concerned. Once we achieve this goal our ability to fight violence and terrorism in the region will greatly enhance the fight against world terrorism everywhere. We are together in this battle and we sympathize with the American people in their suffering as a result of terrorist actions. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and to all Americans.

Mr. President:

Under your vigorous leadership the United States has steadily continued to support our efforts to achieve progress and development. We greatly appreciate your assistance to us. Your firm backing has contributed to the success of our economic reform program. The partnership program, in which Vice President Al Gore is playing a great role, will consolidate the ties between our two nations. Our meeting today gave us a good chance to deepen our cooperation in the future and strengthen our ties of friendship in all fields. Thank you.

Presidents Mubarak and Clinton then answered reporters' questions.

[Unidentified correspondent] According to some reports, Israel has a new plan to build new roads in the West Bank, something that has been seen as proof of an Israeli hardline attitude.

[Clinton] First of all, I have seen reports on this issue but I do not know if they refer to new extensions of already existing roads. I do not know if the Israeli Government has adopted such a policy on this matter. The reports say that a member of the Israeli Government made such a proposal. Therefore until the Israeli Government adopts this policy, I do not want to direct any blame to it about something that has not happened yet. We are anxious about any development that might adversely affect the peace process. We expect and believe that Israel will adhere to the existing agreements, including the Oslo Agreement and the other agreement signed here. The Israeli prime minister has assured me of this and until we have evidence to the contrary, then we believe it is so. I don't think that I should say more. [passage omitted]

President Mubarak then answered the same question saying: I can frankly state that I don't know where these roads will be built but I hope that they will not be built on the territories over which the Palestinians are negotiating because that would complicate the entire issue. I have fears about this. To maintain stability and to help drive the peace process forward there must be no new developments in the occupied territories unless this is done through the agreement of both sides.

[Correspondent] President Mubarak, President Clinton, after your discussions can you say that you are optimistic about the Middle East peace process?

[Mubarak] I would like to state that when I met with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, he assured me that he would implement all the agreements and fulfill all the commitments that the former Israeli Government made with the Palestinians. Although not enough time has passed, I wish to say that I have hopes that he will be able to continue implementing these very important agreements for the sake of giving people worldwide a good image of Israel as a country that respects its signature. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] President Mubarak: The world's countries will have to deal with fear and the consequences of terrorism in a better way than they are doing today both at home and abroad. What are the points that you discussed with President Clinton today in this regard?

[Mubarak] President Clinton has long experience in this regard anyway. But I can say quite frankly that the main problem of terrorists has started in the Middle East. I do not mean that what has happened in the United States came from the Middle East, but by imitation through the revolution in the media nowadays. Everything is now on television, even how to make a bomb. So people everywhere in the world are imitating what is happening on television. The Middle East problem is very vital and important. If we could maintain peace and reach a comprehensive settlement in this sensitive part of the world, which affects Europe, the United States, and everywhere, I believe we could put an end to at least 95 percent of the terrorist actions in the world. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] President Clinton: How could terrorism be fought at a time when the United States and its allies seem unable to agree on how to isolate the countries that are responsible for practicing state terrorism? And President Mubarak: Realizing the delicate and embarrassing situation you are in as a leader of the Arab world, is it possible for you to condemn and isolate these countries that are described as officially sponsoring terrorism? [passage omitted]

[Mubarak] I can tell you very frankly that Egypt was one of the first countries in the world that has repeatedly announced since 1986 that terrorism is a phenomenon that will spread all over the world. Since the beginning of the nineties I have been stressing this point in every speech I delivered in my country. Many of the world's countries had not experienced the terrorist incidents that take place in Egypt. These were few incidents that were coming from abroad [as received]. Now under the current situation regarding the phenomenon of terrorism we condemn terrorism everywhere it happens, whether in a neighboring, Arab, or Muslim country.

We are against terrorism, but I have a proposal regarding terrorism. We wish to set up a committee, and I think President Clinton is working on something of this sort, whose goal is to determine how to punish not an entire people but only the group responsible for terrorism in any country in the world. Punishing a country as a whole because of terrorism will make the people upset. So we must determine who is responsible for terrorism. This is a new formula of thinking in this regard, particularly since punishing the people as a whole creates other problems.

[Correspondent] Jerusalem represents an important issue in the Middle East peace process. What is your view on solving this problem, knowing that the Palestinians wish to participate in administering Jerusalem without dividing it? And what is your view on the Israeli siege, which is causing great financial losses for the Palestinians?

[Mubarak] I discussed the issue of Jerusalem in my statement. I recall that as far back as the Camp David Accord, when late President Anwar al-Sadat made his peace initiative, al-Sadat talked about Jerusalem and tried to find a convenient formula for both sides. I believe that nowadays the Israelis say that Jerusalem will not be divided. I heard from representatives of the Palestinian Authority that they have not called for dividing Jerusalem. I believe that through negotiations it is possible to reach a formula acceptable to both the Israeli and Palestinian sides. I cannot foretell the details of this formula. We leave this up to the two parties and we can give assistance. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has participated in the recent Arab summit in Cairo. Did you, President Clinton, express your concern to President Mubarak over al-Qadhdhafi's attendance at this summit in what seems to be a violation of the international sanctions on Libya, and did you express your concern over Egypt's support for Libya? And for President Mubarak: Are you worried about a cut in the budget for U.S. aid to Egypt, which amounts to approximately $2 billion annually, and are you considering, as Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has announced here, the idea of cutting some aid to Israel and Egypt? [passage omitted]

[Mubarak] Regarding the concern about the U.S. aid, we did not discuss this at all. I know very well that the aid will not stay forever. We are preparing ourselves so that the aid may be reduced at any time, so there is no reason to worry about this. There is good cooperation with the United States and we do not worry about this. If Netanyahu wants to reduce the aid, I am not against this. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Commentary Highlights 'Importance' of Mubarak's U.S Visit

NC2707144396 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 27 Jul 96

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Qasir: "Mubarak's Visit to Washington Aims To Stimulate Peace Efforts and Consolidate Egyptian-U.S. Relations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Husni Mubarak's visit to Washington the day after tomorrow, during which he will meet U.S. President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and senior U.S. Administration officials, is one of Mubarak's most important visits to Washington. The success of this visit will entail important factors, not only with regard to activating the Middle East peace process but also in terms of returning Egyptian-U.S. ties to the right track. This follows recent deliberate attempts to distort these ties during Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to Washington. Netanyahu sought to exploit the U.S. elections to win the Jewish lobby's support for the Likud government in Israel.

Mubarak's expected visit to Washington has taken on great importance, not only because of the appropriate timing and the issues to be discussed at the Mubarak-Clinton talks, be they political, economic, or international, but in light of many important considerations. These considerations can be summed up as follow:

1. When Mubarak goes to Washington to meet the U.S. President, he will speak on behalf of the Arab nation, not in his capacity as Egypt's leader. He goes to Washington after managing to rally the Arab fold at the Cairo summit, which awakened the Arabs from their sleep and made them reconsider their calculations on a practical basis. Therefore, Mubarak will brief Clinton on the Arab summit's resolutions. These resolutions stipulate that a just peace is their strategic goal and that any attempt to back down, impose a fait accompli on them, or threaten them will be doomed to failure and will have devastating effects on all the region's nations. The resolutions also state that the peace sought by the Arabs is a just and comprehensive one based on international legitimacy and the Security Council resolutions stipulating that land should be exchanged for peace;

2. The Mubarak-Clinton meeting takes place following Netanyahu's recent visit to Cairo. During his visit, the Israeli prime minister recanted his provocative hardline statements and famous no's. He also announced in a moderate and balanced way his government's intention to pursue the peace process with the Palestinians, implement the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 accords, and his readiness to negotiate with Syria on the basis of the Madrid conference terms of reference that stipulate that land should be exchanged for peace. One of the results of that visit was Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi to prepare for the resumption of dialogue;

3. Mubarak's visit to Washington takes place following the recent European summit, the G-7 industrial nations' summit, the African summit, and the Damascus Declaration countries' meeting. That meeting cited the need to resume Arab-Israeli talks on the basis of the principle of land for peace, a move that represents a new impetus to rescue the Middle East peace process from collapse.

This is in addition to the Egyptian-Turkish summit, which removed numerous doubts about Arab-Turkish ties and confirmed Turkey's support for the Arabs' right to establish a just peace despite its military agreement with Israel;

4. The Egyptian-U.S. summit will take place after French Foreign Minister de Charette's latest tour of the regional countries as a representative of the European community and his talks with 'Arafat in a new European move toward an effective role in stimulating the Middle East peace process. The aim was to protect Europe's vital interests in the Arab region because of European security's the direct link to the security and stability of the Middle East;

5. Mubarak's visit to Washington comes after Washington announced its commitment to backing the peace process as a full partner and sponsor of the peace process, based on the resolutions of the 1991 Madrid conference stating that land has to be exchanged for peace. This commitment was apparent in the latest tour of the region's countries by Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the peace process, to hold consultations and prepare on resuming the peace process on all Arab-Israeli tracks; and

6. Cairo's and Washington's concern and genuine desire to consolidate joint cooperation between the two friendly countries in all spheres, especially in economy. This issue will dominate a significant part of the talks between Presidents Mubarak and Clinton. This is especially true because Washington realizes very well the extent of Egypt's political clout and its effective role and sincere efforts to achieve a just peace, in addition to the battle for comprehensive development it has been leading for many years now.

What is more important than all of this is that Washington now realizes very well that Egypt is the key to security, stability, and peace in all parts of the Arab region.

In light of the aforementioned facts, we expect the Egyptian-U.S. summit to produce positive and important results; important not only to stimulating the peace process, but also to rectifying the course of Egyptian-U.S. relations and enhancing cooperation between them in all spheres, especially the economic sector. Therefore, it was not unusual for Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Dr. Usamah al-Baz to go to Washington a few days ago to prepare for President Mubarak's visit, who will take with him Egyptian businessmen and investors to take part in the economic talks.

Egypt: Mubarak Meets Pakistani Envoy, Offers To Mediate on Kashmir

BK2807101796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 28 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak has called for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the United Nations resolutions and has offered to play the role of an intermediary on the issue. He was talking to Pakistani Senator Iqbal Haider, who called on him in Cairo yesterday. The Egyptian president said India must hold meaningful dialogue with Pakistan to settle the Kashmir issue. According to APP, he expressed his concern over the escalation in the incidents of genocide in occupied Kashmir and said India must do something to resolve this sensitive issue. Mubarak said he has already talked to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali about the Kashmir issue.

Senator Iqbal Haider briefed President Mubarak on the human rights abuses being committed by the Indian forces in occupied Kashmir. He also briefed him on the situation in Afghanistan. Referring to Pakistani-Egyptian relations, the Egyptian president said there was identity of views, goodwill, and understanding between the two countries, and added that these relations should be further strengthened.

Iqbal Haider delivered a letter from Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to the Egyptian president. The prime minister, in her letter, expressed satisfaction over the continuous growth of relations between Pakistan and Egypt. She expressed appreciation for President Husni Mubarak's efforts in favor of the peace process in the Middle East. The prime minister also renewed the invitation to Mubarak to visit Pakistan to attend the extraordinary Islamic summit to be convened in Islamabad in March next year.

Egypt: U.S. Accused of Violating Free Trade

NC3007185996 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 11

[Editorial: "Trade in the American Way"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although the United States presents itself to the world as the main supporter of the market economy, with what this entails in terms of the free flow of trade in commodities and services, it insists in actual practice on violating this very principle. The United States maintains a hard-line trade policy, particularly with the main parties, something that has aroused the indignation of these parties and led them to reject many of the U.S. trade measures. As a result, several trade wars have broken out between the United States and Japan, Europe, China, etc.

What is most serious of all is the recent ambition to enact laws whose impact goes beyond the U.S. territorial borders, as demonstrated by the Helms-Burton Act, which imposes sanctions on companies that operate in Cuba. The European and other companies have rejected this law, which led the U.S. President to suspend it for six months; that is, until after the presidential elections there, to ensure that it would not affect his election status.

There is a new law on Iran and Libya. The D'Amato law imposes trade sanctions against companies investing in these two countries, which proves that the United States still insists on implementing its trade policy regardless of the interests of the other parties. This threatens the outbreak of new trade wars, particularly with European countries that have major economic interests in these two countries, such as oil imports and others.

This leads us to conclude that the U.S. trade behavior has turned it from an advocate and supporter of free trade in its broad sense to a major impediment of this cause, something that has become a threat to the ongoing trade liberalization process as part of the World Trade Agreement and portends serious trade wars that will affect world economic growth in general and the U.S. economy in particular.

Egypt: MB Leader Visits Turkey, May Meet Turkish Prime Minister

MM3007094496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 30 Jul 96 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Prominent Muslim Brotherhood Leader Leaves for Turkey"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, AL-HAYAH — Informed sources in the Muslim Brotherhood group, which is banned in Egypt, said that Sayf-al-Islam Hasan al-Banna, the prominent Muslim Brotherhood [MB] leader, secretary general of the Lawyers' Union, and son of the group's founder Hasan al-Banna, left Cairo yesterday for Ankara on a visit due to last several days.

The sources refused to reveal whether or not al-Banna will be meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. They said, however, that a meeting would be quite normal and would not be a new development, pointing out that, in the past, Erbakan had met with several Muslim Brotherhood leaders in Ankara and Cairo.

Some months ago, the Egyptian authorities prevented al-Banna from traveling to Turkey, but they allowed him to leave the country yesterday.

It should be mentioned that al-Banna is married to a Turkish woman, and, over the past years, has spent the summer vacation there with his family.

Egypt: Diplomatic Source Blames Khartoum for Strained Relations

MM2607135296 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 26 Jul 96 p 5

[Report by Ashraf al-Faqiyy in Cairo: "Cairo Holds Khartoum Responsible for Strained Relations"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An Egyptian diplomatic source has said that the Sudanese Government is responsible for the strained relations between Cairo and Khartoum, and denied that his country is giving the Sudanese opposition military support.

In statements to AL-HAYAH, the source, who asked to remain anonymous, accused Sudan of not cooperating in the area of dealing with extremists and terrorist movements, and said: "In this regard, the Egyptian-Sudanese talks have not achieved the progress hoped for."

He attributed this to the fact that Sudanese officials have been evading Egypt's questions, particularly those concerning the Egyptian suspects in the assassination attempt on President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa.

He added: "The Sudanese officials have stressed that they refuse to harm Egypt's security and refuse to allow extremist movements to use Sudanese soil. However, this was not reflected in the security talks, and despite the fact that the information provided by the Egyptian team in the talks gave the suspects' names and approximate whereabouts, the answers were vague." [passage omitted]

Egypt: Al-Alfi Decides To Free 283 'Repentant Extremists'

NC2707150696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1325 GMT 27 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 27 Jul (MENA)—Minister of Interior Hasan al-Alfi issued a decree today releasing a 12th group of repentant extremists who had declared their repentance, returned to Islam's teachings, and renounced their ideas of extremism.

The group consists of 283 repentants; 148 of them hail from the governorates of Cairo, al-Jizah, al-Qalyubiyah, and Suez in Lower Egypt and 135 repentants from the Upper Egypt and al-Bahr al-Ahmar governorates.

In his decision, the interior minister took into consideration the health and social conditions of some of the people who will be released from the al-Mazra'ah Prison in Tura in the next few days.

The measure is part of the Interior Ministry's policy to strike a balance between security and intellectual confrontation of terrorists. The ministry achieves this through coordination with al-Azhar by arranging continuous meetings with the elements who have abandoned their extremist ideas.

Minister of Interior Hasan al-Alfi has decided to pay 200 pounds to everyone released.

Egypt: Commentary Urges Netanyahu To Adhere to Land-for-Peace

NC2607140096 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 26 Jul 96

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "Netanyahu's Remarks Contradict the Facts"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During a ceremony held by the Egyptian Embassy in Tel Aviv to mark the July revolution anniversary, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu announced that Palestinian and Israeli adherence to the existing agreements must be reciprocal and that if the Palestinians fulfill all their commitments, Israel will do the same. Certainly these remarks were part of an attempt by Netanyahu to ease the tension that resulted from his successive hardline statements, which have effectively halted the peace process pending a positive step by Israel.

Apparently Netanyahu timed his latest remarks to precede President Husni Mubarak's visit to the United States by a few days. Mubarak will address President Clinton and senior U.S. officials not only in his capacity as Egyptian president but also as chairman of the latest Arab summit who has full authorization from all the Arab countries to submit the pan-Arab view to the U.S. Administration. It is wrong to assume that the U.S. Administration is not paying enough attention to the Middle East peace process at this time because of its preoccupation with the U.S. presidential election campaign. This was made clear by the U.S. ambassador in Cairo when he affirmed two days ago that the U.S. Administration needs to work in concert with President Mubarak and that the latter's visit to Washington is highly important because it will lay down the rules of future peace negotiations.

President Clinton wishes to learn President Mubarak's views following his energetic talks and meetings with many other Arab leaders. For this reason we state that the outcome of President Mubarak's discussions in Washington will be decisive for the resumption of this region's peace operation, especially as Netanyahu visited Washington himself but failed to convince the U.S. Administration of his hardline policies on peace.

Netanyahu apparently disregards the fact that he cannot turn the clock back and that peace is the strategic option of all the region's countries, including Israel itself. It is the only option that guarantees Israeli security. Peace must be attained before security for the whole region can be assured. Netanyahu is calling for the opposite. He wants Israeli security first and then peace with the Arab countries. This attitude is not in harmony with current Middle East developments and contravenes UN principles and the rules laid down by the Madrid conference. It was this idea that President Mubarak conveyed in his speech to the representatives of 90 Islamic countries meeting in Cairo two days ago. His excellency declared that peace will eventually impose itself, the next century will see important changes on all levels, and that the desired peace needs a sincere will, good intentions, and concerted efforts.

When Netanyahu urges the Palestinians to adhere to the agreements, he is really contradicting the facts because the Arab side, including the Palestinians, have offered all they could to maintain the peace momentum. Hence the next step hinges on Netanyahu's credibility and the extent of his willingness to proceed with peace in line with the principles approved by the international community, notably the land-for-peace principle, not the peace-for-peace principle.

It is certain that Israeli procrastination and evasion will be fruitless and will instead create serious regional repercussions that will do tremendous harm to the peace achievements already made.

Libya

Libya: Visiting Tunisian Prime Minister Calls For Lifting of Sanctions

LD3007200496 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1730 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline, as received] — On his arrival in Tripoli, Tunisian Prime Minister Hamed Karoui made a statement to the Jamahiriyah [Libyan] news agency [JANA] in which he expressed his pleasure with the visit. He said the purpose of his visit was to participate in the meetings of the Higher Follow-up Commission, which would be a good opportunity to evaluate developments in the relations between the two countries.

In his statement, the Tunisian prime minister reaffirmed Tunisia's full support and solidarity with the Great Jamahiriyah in facing the unjust measures imposed on it.

He said that his country supported the Great Jamahiriyah at all international gatherings and had always called for the need to lift the unjust measures.

He praised the civilized way the Great Jamahiriyah had been dealing with the crisis and called for a solution to that crisis.

Brother Hamed Karoui added that the [Higher Commission] meetings provided an impetus to bilateral relations and their development, and that they were considered as another step toward integration in a way that was beneficial to the same Arab people in the two countries.

He said that regional and international issues would be discussed as well as the progress of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU].

He stressed that the strengthening of the AMU would be in response to the aspirations of our people in that union, particularly since the Arab homeland had almost become marginalized in the new world order. Furthermore, it was about time to unite ranks and efforts in order to safeguard the interests of the Arab nation.

Brother Hamed Karoui concluded his statement to the Jamahiriyah news agency by saying: "This meeting will enable us, with God's help, to provide new impetus to cooperation and integration. We are hoping to reach positive results that may meet the demands of our Arab people in the two countries."

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi Calls For Understanding Over Burundi Coup

EA3007201196 Nairobi KNA in English 1600 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tripoli, Libya, 30 July (KNA-PANA) — Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has appealed to the international community not to condemn Burundi's new president without understanding the circumstances that led to his reinstallation.

"It is useless for the time being to condemn the new Burundian President Pierre Buyoya without understanding the circumstances which led to his comeback," al-Qadhdhafi said in a statement issued to PANA in Tripoli. According to him, if Major Buyoya has taken power with the aim of stopping the ongoing ethnic massacre and enhance security in Burundi, "he should rather be supported and we should not be hostile to him". [passage omitted]

Sudan

Sudan: Libyan Fundamentalists Attempted Jail Break Fails

MM3007142196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Jul 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Sayyid Ahmad Khalifah in Khartoum: "Libyan Fundamentalists Fail in Attempt To Escape From Sudanese Jail"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Seven Libyans detained in Kubar prison in the northeast of the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, failed in their recent attempt to escape from the prison, after five of them managed to trick their guards, climbed the prison's perimeter wall before dawn, and jumped onto the public road. They were chased and later surrounded by guards in a residential area intended for prison guards and officers, where they were apprehended shortly before dawn.

While the five Libyan prisoners were able to escape momentarily, two of their colleagues failed to climb the perimeter wall and were apprehended before being able to rejoin their colleagues. They had to face disciplinary measures in the prison, were put in solitary confinement, and were subjected to tightened surveillance by the prisons administration and the security organs, which now have an office inside the Kubar political prison precinct after the regime canceled the long period of incarceration in the security offices located in the Sudanese Armed Forces buildings to the east of Khartoum and known as "the ghost houses".

Some sources said that the seven Libyans are fundamentalists who came to Sudan either at the time when visas were canceled, or with the Islamic and Arab People's Congress, which enabled many Arab and Asian fundamentalists who were wanted in their own countries to enter Sudan. The sources added that the seven Libyans are afraid of being handed over to the Libyan authorities, which have good relations with the Sudanese Government. The sources said, however, that international and regional fundamentalist organizations and groups are exerting intense pressure on the Sudanese Government to prevent these Libyans, Egyptians, Algerians, Tunisians, or other groups from being handed over to the authorities in their own countries.

Although some sources are saying that the Sudanese Government recently handed over some Egyptians to Cairo, [Sudanese] official quarters are denying that this is the case, but are not ruling it out should Egypt or other states produce the necessary legal evidence against those people living in Sudan.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that there are now in Kubar prison dozens of fundamentalist detainees who were arrested by the Sudanese authorities over the past months, particularly before and after the recent Arab summit. In addition, some sources have said that although the Iranian Government, and other governments sympathetic to the fundamentalists expelled by Sudan, are refusing to receive them, they are ready, however, to finance their deportation to specific areas in Afghanistan controlled by the Taleban movement.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Terrorist 'Theoretician' Interviewed in Jail

MM3007182096 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 29 Jul-4 Aug 96 pp 10-14

[Report on interview with Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, "the ideological theoretician of the perpetrators of the Riyadh explosion," by Jamal Khashuqji in a Jordan prison; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Shortly after the Riyadh explosion and before the al-Khubar explosion, AL-WASAT met with Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, the ideological theoretician of the perpetrators of the Riyadh explosion, in his prison in Amman on the grounds that his name was mentioned in the confessions of the perpetrators of the first operation, as carried by Saudi television some weeks before the four young men who confessed their crime were executed. The most prominent of the four was 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mu'aththam, who said in his confessions that he was influenced by the ideas of another young man in Jordan, namely al-Maqdisi himself, whom he had visited and spent some time with and whose books he had read.

So AL-WASAT'S exclusive interview with al-Maqdisi can be described as a window on the ideology which has dominated some Arab youths in the Gulf, Egypt, Algeria, Sudan, and Jordan. But that ideology, though geographically widespread, is still limited and still an intrusion in most countries.

Al-Maqdisi noticeably describes himself as a Salafi [follower of the Salafiyah Islamic reform movement founded in Egypt by Muhammad 'Abduh] who believes in violence, which he calls jihad for change, he rejects democracy and renounces anyone who participates in it, even if he is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood [MB], and he rejects the modern regimes, which he describes as lowly.

Al-Maqdisi refuses to call his group an organization, and so did the four young men, as their confessions demonstrated. And here lies the danger because this ideology is based on a no-mediation principle, which means that if you are convinced of it, it will be up to you to assess the value, make the decision, and begin implementation without referring to an organizational "authority," and even without considering the consequences. So it is a trend which plants cells, not an organization with one head which shoulders and rotates responsibility and issues orders to numerous branches.

That trend claims to follow the Salafiyah doctrine, although the Salafiyah ulema reject it. The Islamists in Jordan, most of whom are MB members and Sufist groups, describe al-Maqdisi's trend as an intruder. They say that they have recently noticed an abnormal growth of the trend attributed to the Salifiyah whose members wear Afghan attire. One of the most amusing issues they raised, which shocked Jordanian society, was that they urged Muslims not to fast on the day Muslims stand on 'Arafat [mount in Saudi Arabia], although fasting that day is an Islamic Sunnah duty. In their view, that day falls on a Saturday and therefore should not be a day of fasting, otherwise it might be seen as a celebration of the Jewish Sabbath.

It is not clear how widespread renunciation [takfiri] thought is among the Salafi trend in Jordan, but Jordan might certainly witness some disturbing phenomena and spread of ideas alien to the tolerant Jordanian society.

It should be noted that the Jordanian security authorities have succeeded in infiltrating most "renunciation" groups by planting their agents in them, as their activities are relatively public. And so most of their actions were aborted even before they started.

In Saudi Arabia society was shocked when the confessions of the four men were broadcast and it transpired that the perpetrators of the operation were natives of the country, which is religious by nature and which had not had confrontations between the state and the mosque, as in other countries. Being religious had never been a cause for the authorities' concern. It was a normal and natural thing in an Islamic state like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

That is why Saudi writers have insisted that the ideology of the four young men was an intrusion and resented the fact that it was exported to a country where religious education is obligatory. Even the description of the culprits as Salafis caused general displeasure because the Salafiyah represents common ground for everyone and because the country's policy is based on respect for this middle-of-the-road line of the righteous predecessors with whom the Saudis are proud to be associated.

Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi entered the preventive security room in the Sawwaqah desert prison, which is some 70 km south of Amman, without offering any greeting. When I introduced myself to him and reminded him that we had met before he was sent to prison, when he was a fugitive, he apologized and did greet me. He said he usually does not greet the security men.

Although he is in prison in connection with the case of the "Imam's Pledge of Allegiance Movement," what is published about him reaches him through his supporters. When he learned that I wanted to interview him and that the interview would be published in AL-WASAT, he began answering what has been written about him, especially his link with the Society for the Revival of Islamic Heritage in Kuwait. When I suggested that we be left alone in the room for the interview, he insisted that the security men should be present "so that they can get God's message."

Al-Maqdisi confirmed that he knew 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mu'aththam, whom, he said, he met "two or three times" and who wanted his books and asked him questions related to the Shari'ah. He said that the last time he met him was six months before his (al-Maqdisi's) arrest. Al-Mu'aththam was one of the main suspects in the case of the Riyadh explosion and was executed after his trial. The Saudi authorities broadcast his confessions on television.

Al-Maqdisi, whose real name is 'Isam Tahir, had gone to Jordan two years before his arrest, after the Gulf crisis, having spent his life in Kuwait and having fought in the ranks of the Afghan mojahedin. He considers himself a follower of the Salafiyah school of thought and emphasizes his sympathy with the "jihadist" trend in Algeria and Egypt. He completely denies the charge of renouncing societies, but he renounces governments and their supporters as well as those who advocate democracy and participate in legislation and government.

At the beginning of the interview al-Maqdisi spoke about his ideas, his view of the society, and the way of changing it. He stressed that "we do not have an exclusive ideology," and that what he believes in is the "the faith of the people of the Sunnah and the group, the al-Firqah al-Najiyah faith we inherited from our righteous predecessors, and what we understand of almighty God's Book in the call to the prophets and messengers which centers on God's words: 'For we assuredly sent among every people an apostle (with the command): Serve God and eschew evil.'" [Koranic verse]

He said that "the concept of worship among people has been reduced to prayers and kneeling and so on, but we believe that it is wider and more comprehensive than that. Legislation is one of the most important meanings of worship, but these days that has been diverted away from God. Legislation is one of the most important Godly concepts and meanings." He said that "the governments ruling Islamic societies want people to worship them by subjecting the legislative authorities to their own constitutions, and they force people to abide by that, involve people in their so-called democratic game, and choose legislators and guardians, each according to his own whims. Some choose communists while others go secular." He did not exclude any Islamic government. He said: "When we saw people forced by their governments to worship in a way they did not feel, we upheld the call of the prophets and warned people against worshipping anything but God and against worshipping people. That does not mean that all peoples and societies have abandoned God's religion. Those who have accepted these governments, laws, and legislations and who colluded with them have in fact joined their religions. We do not care about numbers. That does not mean that we repudiate the entire society, as some have claimed. When we speak of 'heretic societies' we mean by heretic the governments, their supporters, and those who die for them. Anyone who supports them becomes part of them. Those who shun them will be saved. We do not say that people are basically heretic and that they have left God's religion in waves as the Renunciation [and Repudiation] Group and others like to claim. Some modern renegades believe that anyone who does not pledge allegiance to a certain imam or a certain group is a heretic. We, by God, are innocent of all that and never adopted it. People have our books and we hide nothing."

He added: "Our faith is derived from the Book [the Koran] and the Sunnah [prophet's life and teachings], and we do not say that all society is heretical, only those who have imposed and legislated these laws and those who backed them and supported their heresy, the sinister agents who uphold and promote that heretic religion. We renounce those because they are the pontiffs and priests of tyranny." He concluded: "Anyone who says democracy is our choice and who fraternizes with the Jews is undoubtedly a heretic."

When AL-WASAT asked him about the Islamic trend which sees democracy as a means of bringing societies closer to the rule of the Shari'ah, he said: "The philosophy of names does not change the facts. The prophet, may God's prayers and blessings be upon him, talked about some people in his nation who drank alcoholic drinks but called them something else. They define democracy as they like. That is their business, but the real democracy, as defined by its advocates and supporters, is legislation by the people for the people."

He said that the "truth of religion is legislation. To them legislation is done by people, but it is the sole right of God. A deputy who enters parliament has, under the Shari'ah, in fact committed violations sometimes reaching the point of heresy, such as swearing to respect the constitution, which, in God's eyes, is blasphemous. His real job in parliament is to legislate, using God's words for game-playing and ridicule."

AL-WASAT told al-Maqdisi that the Islamists in Algeria almost formed a government through democracy and would have done so if the Army had not interfered, and that Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the Islamic Welfare Party in Turkey, was forming a government, having participated in democratic elections. He replied: "Our parliaments are, under the Shari'ah and logic, corrupt. Democracy allows all trends to rule, except Islam. My aim is to let God's Shari'ah rule and my method must be legitimate. Democracy is a heretic method and principle, and we warn against it."

[Khashuqji] So what is the way to change, bearing in mind that you believe in violence as a means of changing the society?

[Al-Maqdisi] I am not ashamed of that charge. I am proud of it and I do not bury my head in the sand. The jihad, which they call violence or terrorism, is a duty like alms and its time comes when the situation is ripe. There is a way for every situation. Anyone who in his own country feels that he can change the regime with violence may do so. They know their conditions best. [Al-Maqdisi ends]

He was asked about those who were detained along with him and about the arms and explosives some of them had. He replied: "Jihad runs in our blood. Most of the young men were trained in Afghanistan and lived the jihad. Possession of arms is not prohibited under the Shari'ah. The prophet, may God's prayers and blessings be upon him, said: Whoever has not invaded or has not thought about invasion dies a pre-Islamic death of ignorance. some of the brothers who were arrested were planning an operation across the river to avenge the massacre of the Ibrahimi mosque."

He added: "One of them consulted me and I told him literally that believing in God, the one and only God, is more important than an operation, but I see no objection to actions against the Zionist enemy. So I gave them some explosives and ruled that they could be used."

Asked what he thought of what was happening in Algeria, he replied: "Our brothers in Algeria have their own viewpoint. They assess their own conditions, and we wish them well and pray God to give them victory against their enemies. We are in prison and do not hear their news, but we know that they are fighting for a great cause because they are fighting the renegades who are more evil than the Jews and the Christians, but each situation has its own wisdom. We work according to our capabilities and we now have nothing to offer except the call for God. I do not say this out of fear, for jihad is our highest aspiration, but the reality in the country needs the call."

[Khashuqji] But the young men who are with you are of poor educational standards. One of them is illiterate....

[Al-Maqdisi] It does not matter. The young men who were detained with me in connection with the "Imam's Pledge of Allegiance Movement" charge have no organizational link with me. I had made a point of not allowing myself to go into an organizational shell and of making my call and my writings open to all Muslims of all trends. I gave those young men some lessons. Some of them are illiterate and some are educated. They were charged in connection with the "Imam's Pledge of Allegiance Movement." That name does not exist as far as I am concerned, and I am linked to nothing of that kind and do not see myself as an imam or call for allegiance to an imam, whether known or unknown. That "Imam's pledge of allegiance" is a fabrication.

[Khashuqji] So what trend do you represent?

[Al-Maqdisi] I can say that I am a part of the Salafiyah school, but I have no organization. [Al-Maqdisi ends]

When we told him that the ulema of the Salafiyah school such as Ibn-Baz and al-Albani refuse to renounce the regimes and their efforts, he accused them of going astray. He refused to name his shaykhs. He explained that he was influenced by some contemporaries including "a famous and righteous shaykh who was a member of the MB at one time and then followed a corrective line under his Salafiyah faith, and he combines the Salafiyah, the movement, and the call."

I asked him if he was referring to Shaykh Surur Zayn-al-'Abidin, who now lives in Britain and is rumored to be behind an organization which combines the Salafiyah and the organizational structure of the MB, he declined comment saying: "I do not wish to mention names."

He said that he studied science for three years in Iraq and interrupted his studies after the Iraq-Iran war. "My wish was to study in holy Medina, and I did indeed go there and was tutored by the ulema there."

He added that he worked as director of a printing press in Kuwait and then worked in business for two years after leaving that country following the Gulf crisis, and was then arrested in Jordan. Asked to what extent he was influenced by the Society for the Revival of the [Islamic] Heritage in Kuwait, he replied: "It was reported in AL-WASAT that I was influenced by the Society for the Revival of the Heritage and that I used to go there. When I read the report I realized that it was taken from my interrogation by intelligence officers. The story is not true. I gave it during the intelligence officers' interrogation. My aim was to mislead, and I expected that the officials of the Islamic Heritage Society would be surprised when they read it because they are some of my bitter adversaries and enemies. Their Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Khaliq accuses us of being renegades and questions our call. I have heard from trusted brothers that he said that I was claiming to be the sole trustee of the nation of Ibrahim, but, God forbid, I would never make such a claim.

"I had no links with the Society for the Revival of Islamic Heritage and I was never influenced by it at all. I used to retort to their suspect presentation of democracy, because they participated in parliament."

He confirmed that he was influenced by the views of Sayyid Qutb but denied that he had joined the MB organization, and said that he did not renounce them as heretics "although I disagreed with their line." He said that he only briefly met with Shaykh 'Abdallah 'Azzam in Afghanistan "and we had some discussions about ways of dealing with the Afghans. There was no enmity between us, and I was not one of his followers."

[Khashuqji] You do not send your children to government schools, but you yourself studied at an Iraqi university and went to some Afghan schools financed by Saudi Arabia. How do you justify this contradiction?

[Al-Maqdisi] One does not get wisdom and vision all at once. I have passed through stages. I studied at some universities and I saw the corruption and sin there. I do not want that for my children. My son Muhammad is 10 years old and is memorizing God's holy Book fully. Most of his readings consist of "the Beginning and the End" by Ibn Kathir, and "the Perfect" by Ibn-al-Athir. My son 'Umar is two years younger and is memorizing 26 parts [of the Koran]. I have not sent them to school and I will not do so.

It is not a question of prohibition, and I cannot say that all schools are prohibited. I wrote a book a long time ago in Kuwait which I called "Preparing the Knights To Leave the Corruption of Schools." It was addressed to those who rejected the tyranny and were unable to apply God's Shari'ah to their homes and children. Ours is not a call for illiteracy. My children could read and write at the age of four, thanks be to God. What I am doing is calling for an alternative in education, the same way they are calling for an alternative in economics. [Al-Maqdisi ends]

And why does he not pray at government mosques? He replied: "Some tried to defame us on that matter. We do not say that the mosques are bad. Four things make a mosque bad. We do not say that every mosque built by the government is bad. The prophet, may God's prayers and blessings be upon him, used to pray at the holy mosque which had been rebuilt by the heretic people of Quraysh, and he prayed at al-Aqsa mosque when it was under Hercules of the Romans.

"The problem is not the mosque but the imam. If the imam is a supporter and representative of heretic governments, we do not pray behind him. Anyone who is an agent of heretics cannot be a part of us. Anyone who makes an electioneering speech in a mosque and urges people to elect him and then acts as an imam in prayer should not be followed in prayer because he calls for democracy. I also do not stand in prayer behind security or intelligence officers or behind members of parliament. I would pray behind a good Muslim unless the opposite is proved."

What about justice and lawyers? He said: "We renounce the judges because they rule by local laws. As regards lawyers, we have rejected their representation because we renounce the laws on the basis of which they defend us. We do not renounce all lawyers, only those who are subject to the rule of tyranny. Anyone who defends on the basis of God's Shari'ah or on certain established fact without referring to a heretic law is not a heretic."

[Khashuqji] One of the Saudi young men who carried out the Riyadh explosion operation said that he met you and talked to you in Jordan. Do you remember that young man? His name was 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mu'aththam. What went on between you and him?

[Al-Maqdisi] Yes, I remember him. I was asked about him. I did not know him (when I was) in Kuwait, but I knew some brothers who knew him, brothers who attended our lessons or whom I met during studies in the holy cities of Medina and Mecca.

That brother got my books from those brothers and made up his mind to visit me, and he did visit me two or three times. He got the books of mine which he did not have and asked me some questions about the Shari'ah. That is the link I had with him. I was surprised when I read his name among the four brothers [who were executed in Saudi Arabia]. I had thought that that major action was too early for him.

[Khashuqji] What do you think of the Riyadh explosion?

[Al-Maqdisi] What I can say is that no Muslim who knows his religion would condemn that action. Although I am not now in the field of material action, I do not regret or feel sorry about the death of seven of those who fight God's religion and who support Israel day and night, even though I had nothing to do with that act. [Al-Maqdisi ends]

When was he visited last by al-Mu'aththam?

He replied: "Perhaps the last visit was six months before I was arrested. He was asking for my books which were not available to him, such as the book 'Focus on Exposing the Anomalies of the Time,' and the book

'Exposing the Law of the Jungle.' He was trying to get these books into the peninsula and spread them among the youth."

[Khashuqji] And do you know the Syrian Abu-Mus'ab and the Palestinian Abu-Qitadah, who live in London? What do you think of their views?

[Al-Maqdisi] They are some of our righteous brothers. I never met Abu-Qitadah, but I have read some of his books and heard some of his tapes. He is on the right path of the predecessors of this nation, and God knows. I probably met Abu-Mus'ab in Afghanistan. I have read his book about the Islamic revolution in Syria. It is a good research.

[Khashuqji] Some people accuse you of renouncing others as heretics, but you say you renounce governments, those who support them, and those who do not differ with them, which in the final analysis means renouncing the vast majority. For instance, in Jordan 400,000 people work for the government, including those working for it and those on pension. What is your comment?

[Al-Maqdisi] Not every government employee should be renounced. I answered such question in a book called "Enlightening Answers to the Questions of the People of the Peninsula." We would like our brothers to steer clear of governments. The prophet, may God's prayers and blessings be upon him, let some of his companions work with the heretics. We cannot say that all government jobs are prohibited or constitute heresy, not unless they include heresy or help or support for heresy or the religion of heresy. When we say that the regimes are heretic we do so not haphazardly but with legitimate evidence, and we only renounce those who are loyal to them.

[Khashuqji] Can you tell us something about yourself?

[Al-Maqdisi] I have not had periods of affluence or need. My means are moderate or above moderate, thank God. I was born in the village of Burqa in the Nabulus District and left when I was one and a half years old. I lived in Kuwait for 30 years. My father worked there as head nurse at the Health Ministry and our financial situation was good. Iraqi intelligence arrested me when I was studying in Iraq. I was detained for two days because of certain Islamic books in my possession. I had become acquainted there with some Salafis and MB members who wanted these books.

On 19 December 1993 my home was stormed for the first time in Amman. After that it was stormed seven times because of the lessons and the call [Da'wah]. I was a fugitive for four months. The intelligence service discovered the explosives after three months of pursuit.

Saudi Arabia: Crown Prince Receives Kuwaiti Prime Minister

LD3007140096 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and the prime minister of the fraternal State of Kuwait, arrived in Jeddah this afternoon. [passage omitted]

His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the crown prince, deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, and his brother His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister of the fraternal State of Kuwait, held a tete-a-tete meeting at the guest palace in al Hamra in Jeddah this afternoon.

During the meeting the two officials discussed the developments in the regional and international arenas, issues of common interest, and the fraternal relations between the two sisterly countries within the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Saudi Arabia: Deputy Premier Praises Security Agreement With Yemen

LD3007135496 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the crown prince, deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, expressed the hope for a promising Saudi future in the scientific and technical fields. [passage omitted]

His royal highness recalled at a session of the Council of Ministers, which he chaired at al-Salam Palace yesterday, Monday afternoon, the teachings of the Holy Koran and the prophet's tradition. [passage omitted]

His Excellency Information Minister Fu'ad Bin 'Abd-al-Salam Bin-Muhammad al-Farisi said after the Council of Ministers' meeting that his highness reviewed the Saudi-Yemeni security agreement, which was signed in Jeddah last Saturday by his royal highness the interior minister and his excellency the Yemeni interior minister. His highness described it as being good and constructive for the consolidation of the various security aspects between the two fraternal countries.

His excellency the information minister said also that the council looked into the agenda and issued the following resolutions:

After taking cognizance of the documents issued by the prime minister's Office — encompassing the letter of his highness the foreign minister and the recommendation of the general commission of the Council of Ministers — the council decided to agree on the Kingdom's contribution to the budget of the steering committee for Bosnia-Herzegovina with an amount estimated at $127,747. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Yemen: Minister Discusses Saudi Talks on Employment, Security, Terrorism

MM3007125796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 30 Jul 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Mustafa Shihab in Riyadh and 'Abdallah al-Hajj in Jeddah: "Yemeni Workers To Be Given Preference in Saudi Arabia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yemeni Interior Minister Colonel Husayn Muhammad 'Arab yesterday stressed to AL-HAYAH that Yemeni workers will be given preference when Saudi Arabia recruits workers. He quoted reassurances by his Saudi counterpart Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz that "the opportunity will be given to Yemeni workers, and recruitment bureaus will give preference to the Yemenis."

Yesterday's statement by the Saudi interior minister's office on the outcome of the Yemeni minister's visit said that "there are mutual assurances on a joint undertaking not to allow either country's territory to be used as a launching pad or haven for any acts that may have an adverse effect on the other country's security and stability, and to view the security of both countries as a joint security matter."

In an exclusive statement to AL-HAYAH, the Yemeni minister said that his country's authorities are still looking for the Yemeni national suspected of selling arms to the perpetrators of the November 1995 bombing in Riyadh's al-'Ulayya district, which caused the death of five Americans and Indians. He said that his country's authorities "requested the information that the Saudi authorities have on this individual, which gives only his description."

He reiterated his country' position "supporting the Kingdom in its fight against terrorism and [his country's] interest in efforts at joint coordination to confront this phenomenon, aimed not only at the Kingdom, but at the region as a whole." He also pointed out that this understanding was in the written message that he conveyed to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz the evening of the day before yesterday in Jeddah's al-Salam Palace, in the presence of Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. He said that "recruiting Yemeni workers for the Kingdom was one of the key issues discussed during my talks with the Saudi officials," adding: "I detected a great deal of interest in the workers issue because it comes within the context of improving relations between the two countries and safeguarding security and stability in the region." He explained that no specific numbers have been agreed "because this depends on supply and demand in the Saudi market."

In response to AL-HAYAH's question, the Yemeni minister said that that the Higher Joint Saudi-Yemeni Committee will be meeting in Sanaa during the second half of next August "to give new impetus to the work of the border committees."

Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz heads the Saudi side of the committee, while Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives, heads his country's delegation in it.

In Jeddah, the Yemeni Minister held a press conference in which he explained that "controlling the movement of Yemenis across the borders with the Kingdom, and the formula which has been agreed with the Saudi side, was the result of a study and discussion aimed at regulating it, since relations between the two peoples are long-standing and are governed by several agreements, such as the al-Ta'if treaty, the memorandum of understanding, and the security agreement."

He revealed that "in the interest of the region's security and stability, it will be regulated at the border crossings and gateways." He said that the security agreement between his country and Saudi Arabia is "aimed at reinforcing and improving bilateral relations." He stressed that both sides "hope to take coordinated practical measures with regard to all security issues which are relevant to the region's security."

Yemen: Opposition Leader Discusses Election Issues

MM3107110796 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 29 Jul-4 Aug 96 pp 16-17

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Malik al-Mikhlafi, leader of the Yemeni Nasirite Unionist Party and secretary general of the opposition coordination council, by 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Mu'ayyad in Sanaa; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Mu'ayyad] What are the issues that are dominating the current meetings of the opposition parties?

[Al-Mikhlafi] We are now at the threshold of the electoral season and we are preoccupied with the main issue. The opposition parties are still discussing the question of guarantees that they proposed to the coalition parties as a basis for their parties' participation in the elections. There have been some negative indications concerning some issues on which the opposition had received assurances from the coalition parties and from the Yemeni president ('Ali 'Abdallah Salih) personally that they would be implemented but where events have shown that the coalition's actions fall outside these assurances.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] Such as?

[Al-Mikhlafi] Such as the amendment of the electoral law. Agreement was reached with the coalition that a political dialogue would be held between the two sides on the issues on which the parliamentary committee failed to reach agreement, and that this dialogue should take place prior to the presentation of the amendments to the House of Representatives (parliament), so that they could be put to the vote as a manifestation of national accord. But the committee has sent all the issues to the House of Representatives without a dialogue being held concerning them.

There is also the question of the electoral system. The opposition feels that the electoral system should be changed to a list system for nominations and a two-round system for the elections. But they [the coalition] insist on keeping the electoral system as it was.

There is also the question of the higher committee for elections. The opposition parties proposed the introduction of amendments to ensure the committee's independence, its reformation, and the participation of the various political sides in it. This is because the opposition entertains some doubts concerning the efficiency of this committee in its present state.

There is also a third question, namely that of the Army and the guaranteeing of its neutrality during the voting. No real solution has yet been found to this question. The opposition parties and the Yemeni Reform Grouping [YRG] (one of the two coalition parties) have raised this matter with a view to finding a solution which would prevent the Army being used to serve the interest of any one particular party or parties.

Other matters have already been settled.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] What were these issues?

[Al-Mikhlafi] Using symbols instead of proxies in the case of voting by illiterates. Preserving the right of each party to campaign for its programs through the government media, and permitting the use of monitors from inside and outside Yemen to supervise the elections.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] You said that the opposition entertains some suspicions concerning the committee's efficiency. How did you come to entertain such suspicions?

[Al-Mikhlafi] The committee has proved its lack of neutrality and its inability to perform its task by accepting interference from the executive authority and particularly from the [General People's] Congress [GPC] party and also by the way it formed its subcommittees, which consisted mainly of members of the coalition parties in accordance with the strength of each of the two parties. Furthermore, the committee has been the cause of the confusion that has reigned so far. It has deferred the process of registration and the amendment of the electoral law for over two years. It also embarked on the implementation of the electoral law despite the fact that the House of Representatives was still discussing the amendments proposed to it. By doing so, it weakened the people's readiness to register their names due to its decision to have a single basic committee for every electoral constituency and to force the citizens to bring their own pictures (photographs for the electoral cards) at a time when the supply of pictures was part of its task and funds were set for taking pictures in its budget. (The budget of the higher committee for elections amounts to Yemeni Rial 1.2 billion Yemeni rials, i.e. about $1 million).

[Al-Mu'ayyad] Your opposition parties have called on your members to register and to obtain electoral cards. Does this imply that you have decided to participate in the forthcoming elections even without securing the desired guarantees?

[Al-Mikhlafi] This point requires some clarification. We consider registration a constitutional right which has nothing to do with participation or nonparticipation in the elections. We might boycott the parliamentary elections but we will not boycott the local (council) elections. We have made a decision previously in this regard. Thus we have not changed our position and we have not yet made any decision on the parliamentary elections. Our participation in these elections depends on our acquiring the minimum degree of guarantees. If we do not obtain such guarantees we are serious in our inclination to boycott the elections.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] Your parties have continued to coordinate their positions and cards at the parties' affairs committee (which is headed by Minister of Legal Affairs 'Abdallah Ahmad Ghanim) despite the differences over some of the committee's decisions which the opposition had described as being illegitimate. How do you explain this disrepancy?

[Al-Mikhlafi] The opposition parties will continue with their registration at the parties' committee while continuing at the same time to attack the committee's decisions which conflict with the parties law, particularly Article 38 (which pertains to the registration of parties), and also to attack the measures taken by the committee against some parties such as the al-Ba'th (party) which it decided to proscribe.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] How do you envisage the elections if they were boycotted by the opposition?

[Al-Mikhlafi] I believe that the opposition will produce negative results, because they will help to convey the opposition parties' suspicions concerning the credibility of the electoral experience to the citizens and to the outside, and will negatively affect stability in the country. I have a feeling that the authorities and the forces supporting the national cause abroad alike are deeply concerned about this matter. We have received advice from these forces not to boycott the elections.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] So do you think you should not boycott the elections so as to prevent the occurrence of such dangers?

[Al-Mikhlafi] On the contrary. We consider that if the authorities are truly aware of these dangers, then they should try to avoid the causes of these dangers and prove their own credibility in terms of promises as well as in terms of the freedom and honesty of the elections.

This is because the opposition will not be the only side that boycotts the elections. There are numerous factors that will prompt citizens to boycott them too. It is already noted that the people's attendance to register for the elections has been poor. The coalition has been aware of this fact, which might grow worse and worse if mutual trust is lost between the authorities and the citizens, and the elections will reflect this poor state of affairs, thus raising questions about the electoral experience. If we add to this the differences that exist between the two coalition parties and their conflicting wishes to obtain better results at each other's expense and at the opposition's expense, then I would expect the period after the elections to be even worse than before. Perhaps questions will then be raised about the extent of the legitimacy of authorities based on a parliament which does not represent the majority of the citizens.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] You have stated that there were factors that would prompt citizens to boycott the elections. Could you specify some of them?

[Al-Mikhlafi] They include the citizens' feeling that parliament has failed during the past term to rise to the level of the tasks entrusted to it and that in the majority of cases it only reflected the wishes of the authorities and did not lead them. Parliament's performance has been weak and has led to the weakening of citizens' respect for it. Regrettably the parliament members' own evaluation of parliament does not encourage citizens to repeat the experiment of electing new deputies after it has become clear that the members of parliament have not been deputies representing them but rather deputies acting against them.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] It is reported that the opposition has been contemplating the formation of a "shadow government" to monitor the government machinery particularly with regard to the economic reform program. Is that true?

[Al-Mikhlafi] Perhaps it is somewhat exaggerated to say that the opposition has been thinking of forming a shadow government. However, I do not mean that the opposition does not have its views, programs, and plans concerning the economic issue. We have submitted dossiers in this regard to the House of Representatives as a counter to the government program as part of our campaign of objections to that program.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] What are the aspects you object to?

[Al-Mikhlafi] We objected to two aspects: First, that the government program was drawn up on the basis of the requirements of the IMF and the donor countries and not on the basis of local requirements, which made the government ignore the citizens' sufferings in its spreading of the cost of the reforms among the various social sectors. Second, the government has failed to assert its credibility even in terms of the implementation of what it declared and adopted in its program.

[Al-Mu'ayyad] From the opposition's viewpoint, do you think there are aspects on which you believe the government program has made progress?

[Al-Mikhlafi] We believe that this program has not made one step of progress. Indeed, it has only helped to increase corruption beyond what existed before the program. What has been achieved was only some financial reforms which provided more funds for further corruption and for the corrupted at the expense of the majority of the people. Regrettably, the middle class, which developed during the past three decades, and on which hopes had been pinned to bring about a national revival due to its vigilance, has been hit and dragged down through the program into the abyss of poverty, and this has negatively influenced the activities of that class and robbed it of the ability to make its contribution to the institutions of a civilized community.

Iraq: Pro-Government Kurdish Party Condemns Iranian 'Aggression'

JN3007201996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1905 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 30 Jul (INA)—The Political Bureau of the [pro-government] Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] condemned the recent Iranian aggression against Iraqi territory, describing it as a serious violation of Iraq's territorial integrity. The aggression proves the falsehood of the Iranian regime's calls for resolving the pending problems between the two countries, the party said.

The KDP Political Bureau stressed that the Iranian aggression would not have occurred if the Iraqi Army had been in its border barracks in Kurdistan.

It called on the international community, particularly the big powers, to pressure the Iranian regime into complying with international law and the UN Security Council resolutions. It called for the Iranian troops' withdrawal from the Iraqi territory and opening a new leaf of brotherhood and reconciliation rather than to wait for opportunities or show false good intentions.

Iraq: DPIK Statement Says Iranian Offensive 'Total Failure'

NC3107113096 Paris AFP in English 1124 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, July 31 (AFP)—Iran's offensive against Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq was a "total failure," the Democratic Party of Iranian Kordestan (DPIK) said Wednesday [31 July], claiming that none of its members were killed.

"The large-scale offensive carried out by Iranian forces against Kurdish refugee camps and DPIK bases ended in total failure because of the DPIK's heroic resistance and the world's condemnation," the Iraqi-based group said in a statement.

"Despite the destruction and damage inflicted on refugees' houses, our party lost none of its militants or leaders. The victims were a woman who died because of the heat, a Christian man in a village near Kou Senjaq, and two wounded children," it added from its headquarters in Baghdad.

The Iranian army on Tuesday started withdrawing from northern Iraq after a five-day campaign which targeted a DPIK base in Kou Senjaq, 50 kilometres (30 miles) inside Iraqi territory.

The DPIK called on international organisations to come to the rescue of the 2,500 Kurds who fled their homes in Kou Senjaq, and thanked the UN and the Western allies present in northern Iraq "for their help to the refugees."

The DPIK, founded in 1945, is one of the main Kurdish groups opposed to the Iranian government.

Iraq: New Assassination Attempt Against Saddam Fails 25 Jul

NC3007142196 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Western news agency has reported that a new attempt to assassinate the tyrant Saddam Husayn last Thursday, 25 July 1996, was discovered at the last moment.

The news agency added that three members of an opposition group, namely the National Democratic Stream [al-ittijah al-dimuqrati al-watani] attempted to assassinate Saddam while he was staying in the al-Habbaniyah resort. They were discovered in the last few minutes, however, when they were trying to board a helicopter to carry out the assassination.

The news agency added that the three persons involved were Air Force personnel: [name indistinct]; the pilot Husam al-Din Khalaf al-As'adi, and the officer 'Abdallah Ghaydan.

Iraq: 30 Executions, 800 Officer Arrests Follow Jun Coup Bid

NC3007145296 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] More than 800 Iraqi military personnel of various ranks are being interrogated in Baghdad on charges of participating in the coup attempt that occurred on 18 June.

Opposition sources have reported that the tyrant's son Qusayy is in charge of the interrogation and that Saddam Husayn has given to the special security apparatus, which Qusayy commands, unlimited powers to arrest any person suspected of participating in the coup attempt, regardless of his official status.

The sources added that prominent among the suspects who are being interrogated are the following: Retired Lieutenant General Mahir 'Abd-al-Rahim Bik, Qusayy's father-in-law; and Lt. Gen. [name and post indistinct]; and Brig. Gen. 'Ata Samaw'al, director of the special apparatus for military communications with Saddam's family and other security organs; and Colonel 'Umar al-Duri, a former director of the special security apparatus.

Jordanian newspapers have confirmed this news and added that the widespread arrests began on 19 July and included officers in Baghdad's [place name indistinct] base and al-Habbaniyah base in al-Anbar.

Furthermore, there have been confirmed reports that the regime executed 30 Republican Guard officers in mid-July [words indistinct] after the bodies of the victims were handed over to their families.

In another development, informed sources have reported that a fire followed several big explosions in a large arms depot belonging to the Republican Guard in al-Taji camp, which houses sophisticated weapons. The sources confirmed that this incident was connected with the coup attempt in late June.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Cites al-Hakim Statements on Coup Attempt

JN3007150196 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], said that the United States and Jordan took part in the preparation for the military coup that was foiled early July.

In a statement published by the Kuwaiti paper AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM on 29 July, his eminence said that a number of suspects and aliens to opposition work infiltrated the military coup plan and informed the tyrant of the attempt. His eminence added that over 25 officers were executed mid-July and that the bodies of some of them were sent to their families. His eminence also quoted reliable sources as saying that over 150 officers were detained within the framework of the regime's attempt foil the coup attempt.

Meanwhile, the SAIRI leader announced the formation of a joint operations room for the management of field action. Basic opposition parties are represented at the operations room.

Iraq: Former Minister al-Qasir Reportedly Escapes to North

NC3007164396 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Iraqi opposition sources, former minister Nizar al-Qasir fled with his family to the liberated areas of northern Iraq several weeks ago and is trying to reach (?Jordan to request) political asylum.

The sources added that al-Qasir who used to be irrigation minister until his dismissal last year [words indistinct] in Jordan in September 1995 and was given the post of presidential adviser.

It is known that Nizar al-Qasir was one of the engineers whose expertise was used by Husayn Kamil in the country's military industrial apparatus [words indistinct].

After the 1991 war, he was put in charge of the canals and dams project whose purpose was to dry up the marshlands.

Iraq: Security Officer Reportedly Killed; Saddam Attends Funeral

JN3007153496 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of mujahidin meted out a just punishment to criminal Colonel 'Umar Jamal al-Tikriti, assistant director of the Tikrit Governorate's intelligence services, on 17 July. Our sources in the governorate said that an armed group of mujahidin opened fire on criminal Colonel 'Umar al-Tikriti at 0345 [2345 GMT] on 17 July as he was getting into his white Oldsmobile, license number 13029/Salah-al-Din. Our sources stressed that criminal 'Umar al-Tikriti was killed instantly and that his car was heavily damaged in the heroic attack.

Criminal al-Tikriti was a loyal officer to the tyrant. The regime relied on him to carry out special criminal missions. He had been under surveillance by the mujahidin for a long time.

The dead criminal was buried the next day. Tyrant Saddam and a number of the regime officials attended the funeral.

Iraq: Saddam Reportedly Orders Work on New Complex Expedited

JN3007162696 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our sources have revealed new information about the presidential and ministerial complex under construction in the Tall 'Abd-al-Satih area, close to Tikrit. Our sources said that parks, swimming pools, and tourist facilities have been added to the plans for the complex. This is in addition to offices and buildings for security, military, and party agencies. The tyrant Saddam visited the complex recently and demanded that officials expedite its construction while maintaining secrecy and preventing anyone from approaching the site.

Our sources said that the administration prevented workers and engineers of Kurdish or Turkoman origins from working on the construction of the site.

Work at the presidential and ministerial complex began after the 1991 uprising to serve as an alternative headquarters for the Saddam regime in case the situation explodes once again.

Israel: Netanyahu Says Syria Proposed Resumption of Peace Talks

TA3007134296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We begin with the prime minister's statements. Binyamin Netanyahu confirms the existence of contacts between Israel and Syria in preparation for the resumption of peace talks between them. He said that he is ready to resume these talks out of the desire to reach a genuine peace with Syria and that the government will continue the peace process with the Palestinians as well. Mr. Netanyahu made these statements in an exclusive interview with our political correspondent Sa'id Mu'addi:

[Mu'addi] Syria wants to resume the talks with Israel at the stage they where at when they were halted at Wye Plantation in Maryland before the Israeli general elections. This comes from the proposal relayed by Dennis Ross, coordinator of the peace process, from Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

In an interview, Mr. Netanyahu said that Israel has received a proposal from Syria via the U.S. Administration calling for the resumption of the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. Mr. Netanyahu expressed his readiness to engage in peace talks with Syria with an open mind and an explicit desire to reach a genuine peace between the two countries.

Prime Minister Netanyahu added that the government is determined to continue the peacemaking process with Syria although Israel strongly criticizes Syria, which is using Hizballah to indirectly wage war on us.

In the interview, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu addressed the issue of negotiations with the Palestinians and redeployment in Hebron. He said that the new government was elected in order to achieve a real peace that ensures security and peace for all citizens and that the government is determined to continue the peace talks through respect for the signed peace agreements while stressing the element of security which is considered the basis of peace in the region.

Mr. Netanyahu emphasized that Israel expects the Palestinian Authority to honor the signed agreements and fulfill its commitments, foremost of all halting any Palestinian political activity in East Jerusalem. Mr. Netanyahu added that a real peace between Israel and the Palestinians can only be achieved if there is a value to the signed agreements.

Prime Minister Netanyahu confirmed that the government will end its consultations and formulate its stance on the issue of redeployment in Hebron shortly, in preparation for holding talks with the Palestinians on the issue in order to reach a new agreement and implement it on the ground.

Israel: Netanyahu on Cooperation With Iran; Yasin Release Said 'Imminent'

TA3107084396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has said that the return of the Israeli MIA's is unrelated to any political deal. The prime minister said that the Palestinian Authority [PA] had delivered certain information regarding soldier Ilan Sa'adon which helped the authorities find Sa'adon's body. This information, however, came within the framework of reciprocal relations and on a humanitarian basis and was not linked to political agreements. Mr. Netanyahu expressed the hope that cooperation could be attained with the Iranians and Hizballah on a similar basis. Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that the prime minister was speaking after a meeting with the chief rabbis. At the meeting, the prime minister pledged that no effort will be spared to locate the four remaining IDF [Israel Defense Forces] MIA's.

Public Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani said that the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin and the return of the bodies of terrorists to their families in Gaza is a possibility worthy of discussion and consideration. Qahalani added that he will express his views within this framework. Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that Minister Qahalani was speaking during a visit to Hasharon Prison.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 31 July carries a related report on page 2 by Shim'on Schiffer, adding that after Sa'adon's remains were found, "reliable political sources said yesterday that the release of Shaykh Yasin is imminent." The sources "added that the PA had handed over the first precise information regarding Sa'adon's remains in May in the hope of helping former Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in his campaign. It is ironic that the efforts proved successful only after the elections and that it is Netanyahu who is reaping the fruit."]

Israel: Body of MIA Found Based on PA Supplied Information

TA3007145296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1405 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a report just released for publication: Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has disclosed in an interview with Television Channel 1 that the body of MIA Ilan Sa'adon has been found. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem adds more details learned from Palestinian sources:

[Ben-Menahem] The body of MIA Ilan Sa'adon has been found, based on information relayed by the Palestinian Security Services [PSS] and searches conducted by our security branches together with the Hevra Qadisha burial society, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], Israel Police, and the Shin Bet.

A senior PSS source recounted the concentrated efforts, which included trips to Arab countries such as Sudan, in order to recover the body of Ilan Sa'adon or to ascertain its whereabouts six years after he was kidnapped by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], murdered, and buried somewhere in southern Israel.

Rashid Abu-Shibak, deputy of the PSS headed by Muhammad Dahlan, traveled to Arab countries to locate the two murderers of Sa'adon who were the only ones who knew where he was buried. They had managed to escape from the Gaza Strip to Egypt, and then to Arab countries such as Syria and Sudan. This concentrated effort began before the Israeli elections, and according to a senior PSS source, an identifying document of the late Sa'adon was passed to Israel in order to prove that the information was serious and could help locate the body. Based on this information the body of Sa'adon was found in southern Israel. [At 1430 GMT the anchorwoman notes that the body was found today in the sand dunes of Palmahim, near Rishon Leziyyon]

Although there is no confirmation to this effect from any other source, Palestinian sources say this is part of some deal and that at some point Shaykh Ahmad Yasin may be released from jail in exchange. I would like to stress that this has not yet been confirmed by any other source and that this information comes from Palestinian sources. The PSS is taking credit for the success and there is no doubt that 'Arafat will do likewise. The Palestinians will thus be making a gesture toward Israel to prove that they are serious in their intentions about peace. There is no doubt that this will improve 'Arafat's standing in the eyes of the Israeli public.

Israel: Official Denies Deal To Release Shaykh Yasin

TA3007160296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The remains of a body, apparently of missing soldier Ilan Sa'adon who was kidnapped and murdered by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorists about seven years ago has been found in the sand dunes of Palmahim, near Moshav Gan Soreq.

Ya'aqov Peri, the official dealing with Israeli MIA's and POW's, said the burial place of Ilan Sa'adon was located with the assistance of the Palestinian Authority [PA], which relayed accurate information about its location to Israel.

Interviewed on Qol Yisra'el, Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi said PA officials have been engaged in efforts over the last three months to get information on where Ilan Sa'adon was buried. [passage omitted]

Peri emphasized that no deal had been made with the Palestinians. Palestinian sources claim the deal includes the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, but this has not been confirmed by any other source.

Israel: Hebron Pullout Said Tied to Palestinian Moves in Jerusalem

TA3107061896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 31 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by David Makovsky]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] There are indications that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is waiting for a Palestinian response on resolving issues in dispute in Jerusalem before declaring the scope and timing of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment of Hebron.

While one official flatly refused to discuss a relationship between the two, another would only speak in general terms, saying, "When we say reciprocity, it is reasonable to think that when they want us to live up to the Oslo accords, we want them to do the same."

In meeting with US President Bill Clinton and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, Netanyahu promised that Israel will adhere to all aspects of agreements reached by the previous government and said he expected the Palestinians to do likewise in the battle against terror. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, sources say that preparations are under way to legally raft a cancellation of the settlement freeze known as Order 360 which the Rabin government issued upon taking office in 1992.

There is speculation that the order is being withheld until after Netanyahu's meeting with Jordan's King Husayn in Amman next Monday [5 August] so as to avoid embarrassing the monarch.

Officials denied that the order might wait until an announcement on the Hebron redeployment occurs in order to minimize criticism from abroad. [passage omitted]

Israel: 'Secret' Labor-PA Accord on Palestinian State Reported

TA3107062596 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 31 Jul 96 p 2

[Report by Evelyn Gordon]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Palestinians would have received the Temple Mount, the Old City of Jerusalem would have become a stateless zone, and the territory on which 70 percent of the settlers live would have been annexed to Israel, according to understandings reached with the Palestinians prior to the elections.

Dr. Ya'ir Hirschfeld, one of the architects of the Oslo accords, revealed these understandings in an interview in the latest issue of the settler magazine NEQUDA. Hirschfeld said he had been negotiating with the Palestinians on a final status agreement with the former government's knowledge and consent.

The tentative agreements he reached with the Palestinians on Jerusalem, he said, "were completely acceptable to (late prime minister) Yitzhaq Rabin, and also to (former prime minister) Shim'on Peres."

While he was not if sure Yasir 'Arafat had also personally approved them, he added, the understandings did have the support of "the most senior level" officials of the Palestinian Authority [PA].

"The Palestinians told us it would take another month or two of negotiations to resolve the outstanding issues (had Peres won the election)," he added.

"The agreement was that west Jerusalem would be recognized as the capital of Israel, while we would recognize al-Quds, outside the municipal borders of Jerusalem, as the capital of Palestine," he said. "On the Temple Mount we agreed that there would be free access for the Palestinians, and the Palestinian flag would fly on the mount.

"The Old City itself would not be under anyone's sovereignty, but in effect the sovereignty would be Israeli — unrecognized by the Palestinians — (since it would be) under the control of the Jerusalem municipality. That is to say, only Israeli police would be there, and no other police... The Palestinian capital would be in Abu-Dis, which is outside the municipal borders of Jerusalem.

"The Palestinians would be able to flaunt the fact that the Temple Mount is Palestinian, with a Palestinian flag waving atop the mount," he added. "And in truth, the Temple Mount would be Palestinian."

Regarding the settlements, Hirschfeld said the understandings called for territory containing some 70% of the settlers to be annexed to Israel, with Ma'ale Adumim, Giv'on, and Giv'at Ze'ev becoming part of Jerusalem.

It was also agreed that the remaining settlements would not be dismantled but the question of their relationship to the new Palestinian state had not yet been worked out, he said.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0400 GMT on 31 July adds that the "secret agreement" was worked out between Yosi Beilin and Mahmud 'Abbas. "According to Hirschfeld, Beilin tried to persuade former Prime Minister Shim'on Peres to publish details of the agreement as part of Labor's election campaign. Peres refused, arguing that details of the permanent status settlement should be left until after the elections."]

Israel: Sharon Defends West Bank Roads, Plans New Settlement

TA3107062096 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 31 Jul 96 p 2

[Report David Harris]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] National Infrastructure Minister Ari'el Sharon defended his policies yesterday as being for "Jews and non-Jews alike."

Under attack for approving the upgrading and construction of two highways in Samaria, Sharon said he has no intention of prioritizing one area over another. Furthermore, the plans for work on the two roads were already in place under Yitzhaq Rabin's premiership, he said.

Sharon dismissed suggestions on the part of left-wing activists that the roads would threaten the peace talks. The two roads will be used by Jews and Palestinians alike, and "this will only strengthen the links and cooperation between the two populations," he said. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (24 SHA'OT supplement) in Hebrew on 31 July on page 2 carries a related report by Tzvi Singer, adding that Sharon also told the news conference that "he is initiating the establishment of a new settlement east of Kibbutz Bet Guvrin, halfway between Qiryat Gat and Hebron. The settlement will be set up adjacent to the site of an abandoned paramilitary settlement, virtually on the dividing line. Sharon also said there are plans, now being negotiated with Jordan, to set up a 2,000-megawatt power station, operated by natural gas from Qatar, near al-'Aqabah. The station will sell 25 percent of its electricity to Jordan and the remainder to Israel."]

Israel: Spokesman for Territories Coordinator on PA 'Violations'

TA3007125296 (Internet) IMRA News Service in English 30 Jul 96

[Interview with Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the coordinator of activities in the territories, by Dr. Aaron Lerner on 30 July; place not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] IMRA: Is it possible to get any of the reports which have been prepared by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] regarding violations of the agreements by the Palestinians?

Dror: It is not our policy to release these reports tc the public. The Prime Minister's Office has all of the reports and it is up to them to decide if they want to release them.

IMRA: There are reports that the Palestinian Authority (PA) has started to make more violations of the agreements with Israel because the violations lead to more meetings with Israeli authorities and the PA, for its own internal reasons, wants to have more of these meetings.

Dror: This is from the imagination of the reporter who wrote the article. I do not think that the PA is deliberately violating the agreements. What is happening is a combination of misunderstandings and forces in the field who are not sufficiently familiar with the agreements. I do not think that it is in the interest of the PA to violate the agreements. The violations are nothing new, nor are our complaints. The difference now is that the story is making headlines.

IMRA: What is the situation now at the crossings into Gaza for agricultural produce?

Dror: At this stage there is no problem moving agricultural produce. We have around 800 trucks going in an out of Gaza each day — more than before closure was imposed.

IMRA: 800 trucks carrying agricultural produce?

Dror: No, 800 trucks in total. Understand that the trucks don't go empty in either direction.

IMRA: What's the story with the road which runs by Netzarim. Are Palestinian police traveling on this road now unaccompanied?

Dror: When the road was first opened to the PA police the settlers opposed it and demonstrated. Now things have calmed down and the PA police are driving on that road.

IMRA: Unaccompanied?

Dror: Unaccompanied.

IMRA: Israel never received a complete list of the PA police. How can you identify a member of the PA police when he comes up to a checkpoint?

Dror: By their PA police ID cards. They are issued by the PA and certified by the Coordinator of Activities in the Territories.

IMRA: How are the cards marked?

Dror: We get the cards from the PA and stamp them with our stamp.

IMRA: What about all the PA police who we do not know about?

Dror: They do not have the card with our stamp. They are probably working within areas in the Autonomy that do not put them in contact with us. If a Palestinian policeman comes up to a checkpoint without a card he is treated like any other civilian — no special treatment. And if he was carrying a weapon, the weapon would be confiscated and we would treat him like any other civilian carrying an unauthorized weapon.

IMRA: Have there been cases like this?

Dror: No. A PA policeman who doesn't have the ID card would not try to go through our checkpoint since he knows we would not let him through without the card.

Israel: Army Continues To Await Orders To Release Female Prisoners

TA3107063096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The release of the two Palestinian women prisoners is being held up. The head of army Central Command, Major General 'Uzi Dayan, has still not been ordered by the government to release the two women. Earlier this month, President Weizman announced he was lifting the opposition to pardoning the women, paving the way for their release.

Jordan: Al-Kabariti, PLO's Qaddumi Discuss Peace Developments

JN2907164496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, at the Prime Ministry today. The two men discussed Jordanian-Palestinian relations and issues of mutual concern, particularly developments in the peace process. The two sides agreed on the need to safeguard the momentum of this process in accordance with its foundations. They also discussed joint action to bolster Arab solidarity and serve higher Arab interests.

In a press statement after the meeting, Qaddumi said: Our visits are aimed at boosting Arab coalescence and working out a common groundwork for future Arab action. Qaddumi stressed the importance of protecting the peace track, in keeping with the international terms of reference on which the peace process, without making any changes. He said that efforts should be made to earn international support to continue the peace process.

Qaddumi denied that he carried out any mediation between the various Palestinian factions and the PLO. He expressed worry at the continuation of the peace process' current situation. He noted that he has no confidence in Israel's credibility, because Israel has failed to abide by the text and provisions of the Oslo agreements. He added that Israel still pursues its previous policies, particularly the frequent closure of the Palestinian territories.

Jordan: Finance Minister Meets With PLO Counterpart

JN3007054296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, met with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti in Amman today. They discussed cooperation, the latest developments in the peace process, and the need to maintain this process in accordance with the bases on which it is founded, beginning with the land-for-principle, international legitimacy, and UN Security Council resolutions.

Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi met with Marwan 'Awad, his Jordanian counterpart. They discussed bilateral relations as well as financial cooperation and coordination, especially financial laws, customs, and other such issues.

Jordan: Al-Kabariti Receives Message From Saudi Foreign Minister

JN3007165896 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has received a message from Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal. The letter dealt with relations between Jordan and Saudi Arabia and the need to promote them in the political, economic, and popular areas.

The message, delivered by Assistant Saudi Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mansuri, also touched upon latest developments in the Arab and international scenes. It reviewed current intensive efforts to give momentum to the peace process in all tracks.

During the meeting, Premier al-Kabariti outlined efforts exerted by his majesty the king to bolster Arab solidarity and push forward peace efforts. The prime minister paid tribute to Saudi stands and voiced satisfaction with developments of relations between Amman and Riyadh. He said he hoped the visit his majesty plans to pay to Saudi Arabia soon will strengthen the brotherly ties existing between the two countries.

Jordan: Larger Influx of Iraqi Refugees Reported in Jul

NC3007152496 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Jordanian sources, there has been a large increase in the number of Iraqis entering Jordan in July. This comes in the wake of large numbers of arrivals in the preceding six months.

The sources added that the buses that [words indistinct] Iraqi citizens who succeeded in crossing the border.

The Iraqi citizens said that they left their country because of the continuing deterioration of security and living conditions, especially after the arrests that took place in late June, which included more than 200 officers, pilots, and party officials.

The Iraqi citizens reported electric power cuts in the capital and other major cities [words indistinct]. Additionally, potable water supplies to the people's homes were cut, a matter that would encourage the spread of epidemics.

Iraqi opposition and Jordanian sources spoke earlier of an increase in the number of Iraqi refugees who wish to travel to (?foreign countries). The sources added that foreign embassies in Amman and UN offices are the scene of long queues of Iraqis seeking asylum. The sources ascribed the Iraqi citizens' wish to emigrate to the poor security, political, and living conditions in Iraq.

Jordan: Government Signs 20-Billion Lire Loan Deal With Italy

JN3007141296 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 30 Jul 96 p 3

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—(J.T.)—Italy said it will grant Jordan a loan of 20 billion Italian lire ($13.5 million) to help the country carry out its economic reform programme as agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

According to an agreement signed at the Ministry of Planning Monday [29 July], the one per cent interest loan, to be repaid over the next 30 years with a 12-year grace period, will also be used to finance Jordan's imports of Italian commodities.

"This is the second loan from the Italian government to Jordan granted on a similar basis, and we were very happy with the results of the first loan," said Francesco Cerulli, Italian ambassador to Jordan.

"It is not a large amount of money but we have already indicated to the Minister of Planning that we will increase it in the future when this fund has been used," the ambassador said.

Signing on Jordan's behalf was Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf.

Jordan: Prime Minister Receives Algerian Trade Minister

JN2907182596 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti today met with visiting Algerian Minister of Trade Abdelkrim Harchaoui. The talks tackled the prospects of cooperation between the two countries in various fields and means to advance them, particularly in trade areas.

For his side, the Algerian minister briefed the prime minister on the latest economic and political developments in his country, stressing that Algeria will witness positive changes on the local front during the coming months.

Jordan: Minister on International Trade Issues

MM3007153196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Jul 96 p 12

[Interview with 'Ali Husayn Abu-al-Raghib, Jordanian Minister of Industry and Commerce, by Nadiyah Mhadid in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mhadid] Talking about the Jordanian economy prompts us to ask you to explain the general economic course in your country. Does it lie in boosting cooperation with Israel or with Europe within the framework of Mediterranean partnership, or due to your geographic position do you seek the boosting of Arab regional cooperation?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Jordan's interests converge in all the above areas. We must not forget that Jordan faces huge challenges. The question of Jordanian-Arab relations is sensitive and important to us, and we work hard to develop it in a true and effective manner. We have entered into agreements for the establishment of a free zone with Egypt and Bahrain and have recorded wide strides in our relations with Saudi Arabia.

The market which we need to enter quickly is the Palestinian one. But there exists an Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian agreement which does not do justice to Jordan's rights in the field of transportation and shipment of goods and associated matters.

Jordan exports over 45 percent of its products to the Arab market while it imports 23 percent from it. We will act more effectively with inter-Arab trade when the level of Arab trade does not exceed 8 percent.

We have new interests particularly with sisterly Algeria. The Jordanian-Algerian committee will meet for the first time at the end of this month, July, in Algeria.

As to the Mediterranean partnership plan, we believe that it is in Jordan's interest to sign it.

[Mhadid] With regard to the Palestinian market, do you not think that competition will intensify between Palestinian agricultural exports and Jordanian agricultural exports, particularly in the traditional Jordanian markets?

[Abu-al-Raghib] This competition will not intensify much, because the output of the West Bank and Gaza is too big compared to that of Jordan, as our export capacity is weak. There is in Gaza and Jericho great capacity for the exportation of olive oil, while our capacity is very limited.

However, Jordan's capacity in the field of vegetable exports is strong while that of Gaza and Jericho is weak. Jordan exports vegetables to some Arab countries, particularly those of the Gulf, benefiting in this regard from the seasonal advantage. Thus I do not believe that there would be strong competition between us [Palestinians and Jordanians] but rather we complement each other agriculturally.

[Mhadid] What do you think of the Jordanian-Saudi partnership plan?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Saudi Arabia is a major economic partner of Jordan. Trade exchange between the two countries has now reached 160 million Jordanian dinars in the two directions: We import 90 million dinars worth of goods and export 70 million.

Official meetings have resumed between the two countries following a long period of cessation, to discuss new developments and evaluate the agreement signed by the two countries in 1962. Our meetings with our Saudi brothers for the establishment of serious economic relations in various fields have been very positive. We have also expanded the list of commodities that are exempt from customs duties.

Furthermore, the Jordanian-Saudi Committee has discussed the question of transit trade to Saudi Arabia and the facilitation of the granting of visas to businessmen. It has also discussed the question of providing work opportunities for Jordanians in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the field of education.

[Mhadid] What incentives does Jordan offer to encourage international investment?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Prior to the convocation of the Amman economic conference, last year we promulgated the investment law which gives the foreign investor rights and privileges almost equal to those given to the Jordanian investor. We have also signed international agreements on international arbitration to protect investors and provide them with all necessary guarantees.

We have also offered tax incentives to certain industries and investment projects in specific areas. We have also reduced income tax. Thus we can say that Jordan is the country that provides more investment incentives than any other country in the Middle East.

[Mhadid] Can you explain to us why Jordan has decided to restructure its economy according to the IMF's criteria and program when it is considered to be following a "free" economy?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Jordan is neither a capitalist nor a socialist country. The Jordanian Government has participated in many investment projects and at one time it assumed ownership of a number of principal economic sectors such as the transport sector and became the major shareholder there. The government also entered the field of mining and assumed ownership of it and still is the major shareholder there to this day. This is in addition to the tourism and hotels sectors.

However, all this did not prevent the development of a Jordanian private sector which provides satisfactory investment in a complementary manner.

[Mhadid] What is the Jordanian strategy in the field of privatization?

[Abu-al-Raghib] If we are talking about the various types of government ownership, then we can say that there are two types of projects: Infrastructure projects, such as those of telecommunications, electricity, and transport which the government will be gradually leaving in accordance with a set timetable and formulas so as not to cause any social or economic disruptions, and according to formulas that will benefit the greater majority of the citizens and open the way for the participation of foreign technical partners.

There are also other companies in which the government participates alongside the private sector, such as the cement, potash, and mining companies, which the government will be gradually coming out of in accordance with a fixed timetable and financial formulas so as to prevent any disruption at the economy-wide level. Thus we will be relinquishing government ownership in a fair manner leaving the field open for bids and consequently permitting foreign investors to participate in these companies.

[Mhadid] Is Jordan prepared to privatize those sectors which it considers to be strategic sectors?

[Abu-al-Raghib] We are now moving toward privatization in the full sense of the word. The government will not come out easily from the strategic sectors and it will not come out in favor of any quarter. The privatization of these industries will not be soon but will take some time and once it takes place, it will be governed by a special privatization program.

[Mhadid] You have recently embarked on the liquidation of the Jordanian Glass Company in which the government has a 65 percent share. Why did you favor the liquidation solution?

[Abu-al-Raghib] It can be said that the government has succeeded in most of the government projects though it failed in some such as that of the Glass company, the Television Production project (which we are now bent on selling), and the AL-SHA'B newspaper project which we have now sold. The Glass project failed because of bad management, price fluctuations, and the political conditions in the markets. So we decided as a government to get out of this project and revive it [in the private sector] due to the good quality glass it produces.

There are plans to revive some development projects in Ma'an area in southern Jordan. But the management of these projects will not be by the government but rather by the private sector.

[Mhadid] What was the fate of the workers under this plan?

[Abu-al-Raghib] We have awarded compensation to some of the workers and used some others in other government companies and projects. Thus the question of the workers can be considered resolved.

[Mhadid] What is the government's policy in regard to resolving the unemployment problem?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Absorbing unemployment and eliminating poverty are among the most important matters the government seeks to achieve. The unemployment problem is due to various causes such as the imbalance between the number of university graduates and market needs and the Gulf countries' inability to absorb Jordanian manpower on the same scale as in the past due to the new political conditions in the region. This is in addition to the shortage of Jordanian manpower in the field of agriculture, which is dominated by Egyptian manpower.

Unemployment, which has reached 16 percent, is a big problem that is difficult to resolve through boosting development and investment rates alone. It is essential that part of this manpower should be absorbed by the countries surrounding us and particularly the Gulf countries.

The second element lies in the widening and preparation of the investment climate and encouragement of investment on a large scale so as to provide a wider field for the employment of Jordanian manpower.

The third element lies in replacing foreign manpower with Jordanian manpower in accordance with the rehabilitation of national capabilities programs and the reduction of the volume of foreign manpower, which now exceeds a quarter of a million in Jordan.

The fourth element lies in embarking on a medium- and long-term study of the needs of the market and ways to absorb graduates of the universities and vocational schools into the country's economic life.

[Mhadid] Has Kuwait regained its past capacity to absorb Jordanian manpower?

[Abu-al-Raghib] No. This is because Jordanian-Kuwaiti political relations are still at the threshold of reconciliation. However, we are more reliant on the Saudi market.

[Mhadid] To what extent has Jordan's political stance toward Iraq influenced the trade exchange between the two countries?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Jordan continues to provide Iraq with all its humanitarian needs such as medicines and food in accordance with a UN agreement. Jordan still imports all its oil needs from Iraq which is considered Jordan's biggest economic partner.

Political relations between Iraq and Jordan are still characterized by coolness due to the political conditions and regional formulas. But economic relations continue as they were in the past. Indeed, we support the Iraqi people and call for the easing of sanctions imposed on them so that Iraq may return as a strong power to the Arab and international fold.

I do not believe that Iraq will be able to dispense with Jordan nor that Jordan will be able to dispense with Iraq. Political misunderstanding has no bearing on relations between the two countries and the two peoples.

[Mhadid] You recently staged a Jordanian fair in Britain. How do you evaluate the success of this fair?

[Abu-al-Raghib] The display of Jordanian products within the framework of the Jordanian Week in Britain was aimed at acquainting British businessmen and investors with Jordan's economic potential. We sought in particular to publicize the traditional and handicrafts industries as well as those of the Dead Sea which we sought to promote through that fair. We believe there is much scope for exporting Jordanian products to Britain, but it requires greater preparation on our part as at present there is a commercial flaw which is largely in favor of Britain.

[Mhadid] But why was there concentration on promoting light industries more than other industries?

[Abu-al-Raghib] This was due to the fact that the exhibition hall at the British Chamber of Commerce had limited space and was unsuitable for the display of heavy industries. Thus there was concentration on the light industries which British buyers or traders can acquaint themselves with, with a view to marketing them in Britain later. The fair was basically set up as a start for the presentation of Jordan to the British market. We might repeat the experiment with a bigger exhibition in the future.

[Mhadid] How do you evaluate the British economic moves in respect of the region's counties?

[Abu-al-Raghib] The Europeans are natural partners of the region's countries. Due to numerous reasons and considerations such as security, historical, and political considerations as well as considerations of economy and geographical neighborhood among the countries of the Middle East, Britain has wide-scale interests in the region.

However, the European interest in the region is more intensive than that of Britain. The Germans, French, and Italians have a greater presence in our region, and the volume of their investments exceeds by far that of British investments. Britain centers its economic interests on other parts of the world including the Gulf countries. But it is not present in such force in the Mediterranean basin.

[Mhadid] However, the area's projects which we are talking about continue in the final analysis to depend on the political stability factor.

[Abu-al-Raghib] If we talk about bilateral projects between Jordan and Israel, there is a bilateral peace accord (from which there can be no return). Unlike regional projects which could face trouble, [bilateral] projects can continue. For this reason, we must talk about a comprehensive and just peace on all tracks.

[Mhadid] How far have you gone in the implementation of the tourist leisure project which was to be set up by an American company?

[Abu-al-Raghib] The idea of the project was not ours. There were some legal problems including the inability to provide the necessary capital for the project. Furthermore, the company was not equipped to embark on any investment project.

[Mhadid] Are there any new projects for the development of the strategic phosphate and potash industries?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Our priorities in the field of industry lie in developing those industries whose raw materials we possess such as phosphate and potash. We are working on bolstering subsidiary industries connected with these industries such as the fertilizers industry which are currently seeing partnership projects with Pakistani and Indian quarters.

[Mhadid] Where will you build the electric power station?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Most likely, it is going to be at Aqaba. Bids will be invited for the supply of natural gas-fired electric power for the supply of electricity to Jordan and its neighbors.

[Mhadid] When will the tender be announced?

[Abu-al-Raghib] Within the next two months, and it will be for the construction of the power station. As to the petroleum refinery, the preliminary agreement concerning it has already been signed.

[Mhadid] What are the problems facing the liquefaction of Qatari gas to Jordan, Palestine, and Israel?

[Abu-al-Raghib] At present, there is interest in an Egyptian gas pipeline to be undertaken by an Egyptian-American company aimed at the construction of a pipeline to Israel with a branch to the Palestinian National Authority and another to Jordan. There is another offer pertaining to bringing Qatari gas to Aqaba and from there distributing it to Jordan, Palestine, and Israel. However, in the end, the problems that arose centered on the difficulty in finding the best project that would satisfy the three countries at one and the same time, that is which would suit the three countries and provide them with the best conditions.

[Mhadid] Is the competition between the two aforementioned projects the cause for the delay in implementing the project?

[Abu-al-Raghib] I believe that the Egyptian-American company has presented a project for the liquefaction of the gas and at the same time put forward options for electric power station construction at Aqaba, while "Unron" [as transliterated] has also put forward offers for electric power generation and gas liquefaction.

Thus all there is so far are mere ideas which need to be formulated into specific projects to be presented to the countries within economic feasibility formulas so that these countries can decide which costs are more acceptable to them. For in the final analysis, those concerned are the consumers in the different countries (Jordan, Israel, and Palestine). The matter requires a study and costing.

Jordan: Opposition Parties Studying National Front Formation

MM2607154996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Jul 96 p 6

[Unattributed report: "New Opposition Front in Jordan 'To Rectify Government Orientations and Practices'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Attorney Milhim al-Tall, spokesman for the opposition parties' higher coordination committee, has announced that great strides have been made in connection with the formation of a national front comprising the opposition parties.

He told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Amman that the opposition parties are currently studying a paper prepared by a committee of independent figures on ways of forming such a front.

Meanwhile, Attorney Salim al-Zu'bi, the committee's member who belongs to the pan-Arab tendency, has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the idea of forming such a front emanated from some opposition parties and center parties, which are seeking to form a broad-based opposition front.

He added that the committee prepared the required paper and submitted it to the opposition parties, which are currently studying it. He noted that the paper includes a mechanism for setting up the front and allowing nationalist figures and the parties to join it with a view to expanding the opposition base: parties, unions, federations, and people's organizations.

He said that all these parties operate in accordance with the Constitution and the law and that the committee held several public meetings during which the working paper was prepared.

The committee, headed by former Jordanian prime minister Ahmad 'Ubaydat, includes Salim al-Zu'bi, Muhammad Faris al-Tarawinah, Ahmad al-Tarawinah, Labib Qamhawi, Taysir al-Zubari, and George Haddad.

Jordan: Opposition Party Demands Release of Leaders

JN2707110396 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27 Jul 96 p 12

[Report by Rana al-Husayni; "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—A Jordanian opposition party has denounced the arrest last week of two of its leaders, who the party claims were detained in relation for their opposition of the government's plans to hike the price of bread.

In a statement issued Thursday [25 July], the Jordan People's Democratic Party condemned the arrest and called on the government to release its leaders.

Mithqal Zinati and Muhammad Khalil were among more than 100 political activists and leaders of a coalition of nine parties who participated in the July 21 sit-in in front of Parliament to protest the government's move.

Mr. Zinati, a farmer, was interrogated twice by the security forces after the July 21 sit-in before being apprehended on July 24, a family member claimed.

He told the JORDAN TIMES Friday that the authorities searched Mr. Zinati's house in Wadi al-Yabis area in the Jordan Valley and seized some petitions that had signatures on them.

Mr. Khalil was preparing a sit-in for Friday in the town of al-Salt to protest the increase in bread prices, Agency France Press (AFP) reported Friday.

A spokesman at Hashd told the JORDAN TIMES Thursday that other party members, Muhammad Abu-al-Rub and Muhammad Abu-Marrar, were also arrested by police following the sit-in and were released Wednesday.

According to an Islamic Action Front (IAF) source, security forces apprehended three of its members following the Sunday sit-in.

The opposition political parties, along with the unions and women's groups, called for the sit-in front of Parliament in reaction to the government's announcement that it will raise the price of bread to 250 fils a kilo from 85 fils.

Forty-one deputies have also signed a motion asking the government to reconsider the increase in bread prices.

Parliament Wednesday said it will devote its Sunday's regular session to discuss the government's policy on bread subsidies.

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has said his government will not go back on its plans concerning the bread issue.

Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir also said that bread prices had to be increased to reduce the budget deficit, but stressed that the government would compensate people for the higher cost of bread. The government has pledged that each Jordanian, including displaced Palestinians and refugees, would receive an annual wage increase to offset the hike in bread prices.

Jordan: AKHBAR AL-'USBU' Editor Released on Bail

JN2707111296 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27 Jul 96 p 3

[Report by Rana al-Husayni; "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Tawfiq Kiwan, editor of the weekly tabloid Akhbar al-Usbu'was released Thursday [25 July] on JD [Jordanian dinars] 1,000 bail after he was detained Wednesday on charges of inaccuracy in reporting news and undermining national unity.

Ziyad al-Khasawinah, Mr. Kiwan's defence attorney, told the JORDAN TIMES that President of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) Sayf al-Sharif intervened on behalf of his client.

"The Judge informed us that the JPA president contacted him in a plea to free Mr. Kiwan," Mr. al-Khasawinah said.

Mr. al-Sharif said he had a pledge from both the ministers of justice and information not to detain journalists pending trial.

The formal charges pressed against Mr. Kiwan include overlooking objectivity and honesty in reporting on news, publishing inaccurate news, and threatening the country's security.

His 24 hours apprehension came following a complaint made by director of the press and Publications Department concerning three news items that were published in a Nov. 30, 1995 issue.

Mr. Kiwan, 62, became the fourth editor, either to be detained or to be asked to appear in court by the prosecutor general in the past few weeks.

According to Mr. al-Khasawinah, the court is expected to set a date to start hearing Mr. Kiwan's case in the coming few weeks.

Government sources said recently that the recent arrests were part of a government campaign against violators of the Press and Publications Law.

The move was prompted by a Parliament call last week demanding that the authorities and the media take measures to put an end to writing that undermines national unity and Arab values.

Jordan: Government 'Laid-Back Attitude' on Water Rights Criticized

JN2907094596 Amman SHIHAN in Arabic 27 Jul-2 Aug 96 pp 6, 35

[Report by Faysal al-Malkawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Why is it that the Jordanian Government fails to move to sort out the problem of Jordanian rights to water whose sources it shares with a number of neighboring states; namely Syria, Saudi Arabia, as well as Israel?! Why does the Government take a laid-back attitude, standing idly by as it sees a huge drain taking place on joint water sources, leaving it barely enough to quench the thirst of a single Jordanian city?! Such troubling questions are being asked with increasing urgency by the Jordanian man in the street. Public apprehension has hardly been helped by government reports of a shortfall in water growing worse by the year, a deficit that may reach crisis point by the turn of the century. In the meantime, industry experts emphasize that Jordan's water reserve, particularly on the country's joint borders with neighboring countries should be enough to last it for the next 100 years.

SHIHAN has learned from informed government sources that, anxious to maintain good neighborly relations with the states with which it shares water sources, particularly Syria and Saudi Arabia, Jordan has sought to sort out the problem through dialogue. The Gulf crisis, however, has held up the dialogue. The absence of signed agreements among the parties concerned that would have bound the neighboring countries not to exceed the ceiling of their quota at the expense of Jordan's, has tempted them to overconsume.

The sources maintain that despite the elapse of two years since the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, Jordan, insofar as water rights are concerned, is still at a disadvantage as compared with Israel. The treaty provides for Israel to begin supplying Jordan with 50 million cubic meters of water one year after the signing, but Israel has failed to deliver on that stipulation. Israel, the sources note, has sought to excuse its failure to meet the schedule and to supply Jordan with its entitlement by citing technical snags. The Jordanian Government is now exploring funding sources for financing the construction of numerous diversionary dams across the Jordan and al-Yarmuk Rivers. The idea is to dispense with the water Israel now keeps in reserve for Jordan's future requirements. The proposed dams are projected to have a 200 million cubic meter storage capacity of water for drinking and irrigation purposes.

In regard to Jordan's water rights in relation to Syria, according to the sources, Jordan has thus far been obtaining only 30 million cubic meters of al-Yarmuk River waters, although we are entitled to 200 million cubic meters per annum. Jordan's failure to get its fair share is blamed by the sources on the Syrian Government's building of over 30 dams across the al-Yarmuk River within Syrian territory, thus appreciably depressing the level of the water flowing inside Jordanian territory. This, observe the sources, is in violation of a bilateral agreement under which Syria may build only half that number of dams. Moreover, they add, Syria has been drawing off huge amounts of water from the al-Yarmuk River by digging diversionary canals off the waterway to irrigate agricultural land within its territory. Jordan is in the middle of preparing a series of studies dealing with our joint water rights with the Syrians. The intention, according to the same sources, is to approach the Syrian Government with these studies and then try to devise agreements that would parcel out fair shares between the two sides.

In regard to the huge joint al-Disah water basin on the Jordanian-Saudi border, Saudi authorities, the sources point out, have, since the eighties, bored hundreds of artesian wells. The Saudis have installed numerous pumping stations that have used up substantial quantities of water from the basin, while, on the other hand, the sources note, the Jordanian Government, has done no such thing on its side of the border for fear that would have an adverse impact on political ties with Saudi Arabia.

The Saudis have routinely ignored requests by successive Jordanian governments that joint commissions be formed to work out a program for a fair and equal distribution of al-Disah basin water. In the meantime, Saudi Arabia has used all the technology it could muster to pump and exploit the basin's water for its own drinking and agricultural purposes.

The Jordanian Government has of late begun to give serious thought to tapping into the basin's water on the Jordanian side of the border. A two-pronged plan, according to the sources, calls for irrigating land in the basin's vicinity and laying wide pipes to carry water to Amman to help ease the water shortage the capital has been suffering for years, particularly in the summer season. If this project is implemented, the sources of water that have been supplying the capital would be diverted to feed other Jordanian cities. The amount of the water reserve in the al-Disah basin is estimated by the sources at 65 billion cubic meters, enough to supply Jordan with 800 million cubic meters annually for the next 100 years. The basin's water, the sources add, ranks as being in the league of the best quality water in the world. It has the further advantage of occurring in a geological environment free from all types of radiational pollution.

According to information made available to SHIHAN, Jordan suffers from an annual water deficit of 300 million cubic meters, with the shortfall forecast to grow worse over time. Against this background, the Jordanian Government has approached the Turkish Government requesting water supplies to close the deficit.

However, research-based reports indicate that it is possible for Jordan to attain self-sufficiency in water if only it obtains its rights to joint water sources with its neighbors.

Jordan: Government Reportedly 'Split' Over Lifting Bread Subsidy

JN3007175996 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 29 Jul 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-MAJD learned that Crown Prince Hasan has expressed reservations about the government's policy of lifting bread subsidy all at once.

Some people close to the crown prince said that the crown prince tried to persuade Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti not to go ahead with the measures to lift the subsidy, but the latter told the prince that he had already agreed with the IMF that the decision to lift the bread subsidy would be ready before the end of August and that he wants to be the only one responsible for making such a decision in order to spare the royal family any embarrassment.

These people noted that the crown prince tried to make an effort with the IMF with the objective of postponing the decision on lifting the subsidy. But these efforts were somewhat too late because the IMF had already received assurances from the al-Kabariti government to the effect that a decision will be made soon to settle this issue, which was subject of procrastination by the previous governments.

The IMF told his highness the crown prince that it has made arrangements that will be implemented after lifting the subsidy, such as giving loans and grants to Jordan through international establishments that will not lift a finger until the subsidy is lifted.

AL-MAJD also learned that the bread issue created a split within the government. The prime minister, the information minister, the planning minister, and the supply minister insist on increasing bread prices. Another wing in the Council of Ministers rejects such a decision. This wing is led by Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, Engineer 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali, and Dr. Mustafa Shunaykat.

Well-informed sources revealed that each party is trying to convince the deputies of its viewpoint. At a time when the prime minister and his team are trying to convince the deputies that this decision will not affect Jordanian citizens, the other party is encouraging the deputies to adopt a stand against the decision, noting that there are several better alternatives to increasing bread prices.

These sources said that the ministerial team that held negotiations with the IMF on the donor states' aid has given his majesty the king an inaccurate idea about these negotiations. This team told his majesty the king that the IMF insists on increasing bread prices. However, during talks with the House of Representatives' Financial Committee, IMF sources denied this, saying that the Jordanian team told the IMF that it can increase bread prices without any popular opposition.

People close to the prime minister said that he expressed concern over a tribal reaction, not only to increasing bread prices, but also to the decision lifting the fodder subsidy, considering that this is the government's main concern now.

Reliable sources told AL-MAJD that after the petition, which was signed by 41 deputies and demanded a session to discuss the bread issue, was presented, the government asked that the session be postponed until 4 August to gain time and convince the deputies of its viewpoint. AL-MAJD learned that a number of deputies have withdrawn their signatures from the petition.

AL-MAJD also learned that some deputies have begun to prepare alternatives to the decision on lifting the bread subsidy in order to present it to the government on Sunday [21 July]. These include reducing government expenditure by cutting down on travel abroad and per diems, curbing the purchase of luxury furniture, raising the customs duties on cigarettes and liquor, canceling the government decision not to levy taxes on the vehicles of senior officials, especially since the duties due on some of these vehicles amount to 400,000 dinars.

Parliamentary sources said that if the government does not respond to these proposals, they will write a memorandum to his majesty the king, requesting a change in government or royal decree that allows a discussion on withholding confidence in the government during the extraordinary session.

These sources added that the deputies will propose as a compromise the principle of distributing bread by coupons in order to put an end the excessive consumption of bread, which is being used as a pretext by the government to float its prices.

According to parliamentary sources, 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti previously told the House of Representatives that the money earmarked to subsidize foodstuffs for 1996, which amounts to 38-million dinars, was not sufficient to cover the subsidies for rice, sugar, and milk, which amounts to 41-million dinars. He stressed that the figures presented to the deputies in the budget statement were inaccurate and that he could make a decision to lift bread prices without referring it to them.

Lebanon: Constitutional Council Accepts Petition on Election Law

NC3007134996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Constitutional Council has accepted a petition submitted by 10 deputies contesting the current Lebanese election law. Council Chairman Wajdi al-Mallat explained that the petition meets all the procedural conditions which require that it be signed by 10 deputies and submitted within the legal deadline. He added that the council has appointed a rapporteur, whom he has named, and that the next council meeting to discuss the cause of the dispute will be on Saturday [3 August].

The Constitutional Council must issue a decision within 25 days. Its decision cannot be appealed.

Syria: Netanyahu's Peace Process Maneuverings Criticized

JN3007142796 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 28 Jul 96 p 5

[Editorial by Riyad al-Zayn: "Occupation Never Guarantees Security"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The course of developments in the region has evidently shown that Israel still runs counter to basic constituents of a just and comprehensive Mideast peace, especially after extremist Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu took power following last May elections.

Since then, Netanyahu kept making tough and arrogant statements which grossly violate originally agreed principles as termed in the land-for-peace initiative upon which the Madrid conference was launched almost five years ago. The new Israeli Premier is still blatantly adamant on refusing peace obligations and on disregarding the will of the international community. He continued to cling to ill notions that "security should precede peace" and that "peace must be in return for peace"! Netanyahu is making flagrant circumvention on peace constituents by marketing pretexts that the Syrian Golan Heights are vital for Israel's security, that "Judea and Samaria", (the West Bank), are an Israeli territory, that Jerusalem is a "united and eternal capital of Israel" and that the siege imposed on the West Bank and Gaza Strip will continue in order to guarantee the "security of the Israelis and the settlers"!

Netanyahu's flagrant stances are in fact grave and are an open disregard of the international will and legitimacy resolutions. His manoeuvrings and pretexts will not do. His call for resuming peace negotiations without pre-conditions aimed at making further procrastination, at fleeing peace obligations and at undermining the process. Netanyahu's drive to perpetuate occupation of the Arab territories and to impose Israeli hegemony on the Arab region is eventually a fiasco.

Genuine peace needs neither detour and evasion nor fragile pretexts. The region is also fed up with tension and instability. The path of peace is quite clear and wide open, and needs only a positive response to provisions of legitimacy resolutions, namely Israel's total and unconditional withdrawal to pre-1967 lines within the framework of concluding a clear-cut settlement based on justice and comprehensiveness.

It stands to reason that genuine peace is the strong guarantor of security. Peace and occupation cannot go together. Aggression and justice never combine. Israel should be rational and must be unreservedly convinced of the fact that injustice and hegemony have no room in the region, and that occupation will never guarantee security and stability under any circumstances.

Syria: Papers on Netanyahu's 'Exposed Maneuver,' Resuming Talks

JN3107093896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 31 Jul 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "False Peace Costume," AL-BA'TH says: Despite his peace proposals, the Israeli prime minister can no longer enhance his international image by trying to show that he is working for peace, not war. Netanyahu began to use a method of maneuvering and deception. He tried to wear peace clothes by proposing the Lebanon-first idea and declaring that contacts with Syria have continued through the U.S. Administration, saying that negotiations could resume on the Syrian-Israeli track.

AL-BA'TH says: A preliminary review of Israeli, regional, and international reactions to the Lebanon-first proposal shows that this proposal is nothing more than an exposed maneuver that seeks among other things to sever the Syrian-Lebanese track and win a bargaining chip to pressure Syria and the Arabs. As for continuing contacts with Damascus, the U.S. Administration itself did not break off these contacts. This is because it is convinced that Syria is working for a just and comprehensive peace. In addition, the U.S. President is still saying he is committed to the land-for-peace principle and that he will not abandon efforts to advance the peace process.

AL-BA'TH concludes: The peace garment Netanyahu is trying to wear in an attempt to beautify his image and break the international isolation caused by his intransigence and No's is false and can fool no one. While talking about peace proposals that have nothing to do with the Madrid formula, Netanyahu is expediting his settlement plans on the ground in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Syrian Arab Golan, whose return in full to the motherland is a basic requirement for a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Therefore, Dennis Ross and others are right to say that the gap is still wide between Syria and Israel.

In a commentary titled "Spoiled Goods," AL-THAWRAH says: After a series of No's that makes it impossible to resume the peace process, Netanyahu finally came up with a new scenario intended to entrap peace by trying to entangle Lebanon in partial agreements and separate settlements — which failed to achieve a just and comprehensive peace — and disengage it from the Syrian track.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Netanyahu's vanity gave full freedom to his imagination. This made him think that the Arabs would accommodate his proposals, which do injustice to the realities of peace. The head of the Israeli Government also proposed a new maneuver that does not lack malicious expertise and deception by advancing the Lebanon-first argument. This attempt to market these spoiled goods confirms once again Israel's bad intentions toward a just and comprehensive peace. It also shows that Israel is not happy with the shared track and destiny between Syria and Lebanon. The Lebanese crisis has been the result of an Israeli conspiracy that seeks to entrap Lebanon in a separate settlement to undermine its sovereignty and threaten Syria and its security.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Everyone knows about Israeli ambitions in Lebanese waters and lands. Besides that, the Lebanon-first proposal and setting the condition of disarming the resistance before anything else confirm the great deception by the Netanyahu government, which is avoiding the implementation of Resolution 425 and wants to sow discord between Syria and Lebanon, after they have reached such a degree of coordination, solidarity, and unified stand that no plot can undermine.

In a commentary headlined "Launching Peace Process Depends on Change in Attitude," TISHRIN says: Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said his government plans to resume the peace talks with Syria, but on the basis of the invitation to the Madrid conference without commitment to what had been achieved by the Syrian-Israeli talks throughout the past five years and the pledges made by the Labor government then.

TISHRIN says Netanyahu's statements are full of deception. He wants to strike off five years of hard negotiations, mediations, and international efforts — as simply as that — and return the region to square one. Perhaps he is following Shamir's advice, who disclosed after his election defeat that he had planned to prolong the futile negotiations for at least 10 years while pursuing settlement activity in full swing in the occupied territories.

TISHRIN concludes: Syria is not concerned with holding negotiations with Israel out of its love for negotiations. Syria went through the previous talks on the basis of certain foundations, realities, assertions, and assurances about the implementation of the land-for-peace principle. What Netanyahu is offering is negotiation for the sake of negotiation while plans are under way to intensify settlement activity in the Golan, Jerusalem, and the West Bank. Syria is concerned about a just and firm peace and about security for all. However, it also wants to restore its land and to see all occupied Arab lands restored. Syria will not relinquish its rights and will not bargain over the resolutions of international legitimacy, which do not allow the occupation of the territory of others through vague statements or misleading promises.

Syria: Israel's Settlement Plans Called 'Antithesis' of Peace

JN3007163296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 30 Jul 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The Israeli prime minister held a lengthy meeting with council chairmen from the Zionist settlements in the occupied Arab territories to discuss plans to expand and establish more settlements. The council leaders expressed their full satisfaction with what was agreed upon. Meanwhile, Sharon, the minister of infrastructure and the former minister of war and housing, confiscated more Arab land under the pretext of building new bypass roads for the settlers — roads that many informed Israelis said were unnecessary and aimed at transferring settlement activity into the heart of the self-rule areas: the six West Bank cities.

The Israeli peace movement said that Netanyahu has revealed his dark intentions vis-a-vis the Palestinian people and that the collapse of the peace process is imminent. A former Israeli housing minister predicted a dismal fate for the chances of peace in the region. A former Israeli environment minister urged peace-loving Jews inside Israel and abroad to resist the Netanyahu government's policy on settlement activity and expansion and to keep the peace process from dying.

This is the opinion of a majority of Israelis about the Netanyahu government. The international community sounded the alarm and urged the government to adhere to the foundations of the peace process and not to tamper with its principles. Therefore, we, the Arabs, should adopt a firmer and more solid position. In the final analysis, Israeli extremism comes at the expense of the blood of our people and the future of our territories.

There is no doubt that the Cairo summit paved the way for a unified and strong Arab position after a long period of fragmentation and division. The Arab governments have announced their commitment to this position time and again and have called for halting normalization with Israel. However, it is very important to promote the results of Cairo summit by bolstering joint Arab action and pan-Arab solidarity and not buying Israel's claims about peace. Peace can be achieved through actions. The rudiments of peace entail that Israel should publicly pledge that it will respect the foundations of the peace process and implement the resolutions of international legitimacy with a view to returning all the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan, southern Lebanon, Jerusalem, and the West Bank, and to withdrawing its troops to the 4 June 1967 lines.

Israel claims it is working for peace, but its actions undermine its foundations. Settlement activity is the antithesis of peace. Continuing the settlement activity seriously threatens the existence of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. Whoever wants peace does not publicly call, as Netanyahu did, for intensifying the settlement drive or announce that he will not withdraw from the Golan and the West Bank.

In fact, ever since Sharon, the war criminal and the engineer of the settlement policy, assumed the infrastructure portfolio, which was given wide-range authorities, the international community expressed its deep worry. Sharon does not conceal his intention to strip all the Palestinians of their lands and double the number of settlers in the occupied territories. He believes that the good Palestinian is the dead Palestinian. Netanyahu's government is mainly made up of extremists, like Rafa'el Eytan, who believes that the only solution in the region lies in expelling all Palestinians from their lands. Netanyahu himself spelled out the most radical, racist, and hostile positions. No single objective observer is not worried or afraid about the peace process.

Hence, adopting a more solid Arab position, as urged by Syria and President al-Asad; upgrading joint Arab action; and fully implementing Cairo summit resolutions will beleaguer Israel and deny it the opportunity to infiltrate the impregnable Arab wall and sow sedition among the Arab countries.

Sisterly Lebanon recently adopted a noble and exemplary stand when it rejected Israel's proposals and revealed its wicked schemes to drive a wedge between Lebanon and Syria. The two countries clearly asserted the inseparability of the two tracks. They affirmed they sincerely seek a just and comprehensive peace that will ensure the return of land and rights and provide security and stability for all away from any deception, maneuvers, or bypassing of the international resolutions, which served as the springboard of the peace process.

Syria: U.S. Peace Coordinator Said To Leave Region 'Empty-Handed'

JN3007191296 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 28 Jul 96 p 9

[From the "AL-THAWRAH Issues" column by Muhammad 'Ali Buzah: "Unacceptable Reasoning"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Once again, U.S. diplomacy left the region empty-handed. The new effort by U.S. Coordinator Dennis Ross only left the impression of a timid attempt to keep the political process alive. The Israeli Government announced the demise of this process in Washington when it reiterated its intransigent stands and slogans regarding the Golan, southern Lebanon, Jerusalem, other occupied Arab territories, and settlements — the very stands and slogans it used during the election campaign. This Israeli Government is adamant about upholding these slogans. Israeli officials said that the Arabs must adapt to the new Israeli policies, show acquiescence to them, and look for new negotiating formulas. Thus, this government is asking the Arabs to forget about their usurped rights and overlook the relevant international legitimacy resolutions, which provide for the restoration of these rights in exchange for a just and comprehensive peace.

The political discourse by Netanyahu and his government remains unchanged. Likewise, their adverse, hostile, and antipeace stand remains unchanged. They are opposed to achieving peace in accordance with the bases and terms of reference agreed upon at the Madrid conference for the peace process. Efforts are under way to consecrate and entrench this new Israeli policy in the upcoming phase. Toward this end, the Israelis are using crude methods, provocation, defiance tactics, intimidation, and attempts to use blackmail and force conditions. By doing so, Israel is nullifying the prerequisites of a peaceful settlement, circumventing the terms of reference of the peace process, and substituting the land-for-peace formula — which is at the heart of the peace initiative launched by the U.S. Administration to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict — with slogans and policies that render the peace process void of any meaningful content.

These Israeli policies build on Shamir's perspective, which envisaged the achievement of peace in exchange for peace. The new Israeli policies aim to achieve security and peace for Israel. Meanwhile, Israel wants to retain control of the territories and to have normalized ties and open borders with the Arab states. Worse still, Israel wants to use the Arabs and the entire world to serve its own hostile and expansionist schemes, promote its security, and protect Jewish settlers from "Arab terrorism." In fact, the Arabs Israel brands as terrorists are only upholding their rights to repatriation, the liberation of their territory, a peace grounded in international legitimacy, and the right to repulse Israeli terrorism against Arab territories and Arab individuals.

During the Damascus leg of Ross' tour, Syria reiterated its commitment to peace, pointing out that the peace process must continue on the basis of the relevant international legitimacy resolutions and the land-for-peace formula. In contrast, during his talks and meetings with Israeli officials, Ross failed to extricate any substantive concession or sign of flexibility that could be relied on and built upon to help resume the stalled negotiations, particularly on the Syrian and Lebanese negotiating tracks. Ross' talks with Israeli officials produced nothing except ambiguous statements on peace, as well as worthless and noncommittal generalizations that Ross could not use to promote the U.S. effort. In fact, Ross acknowledged that difficulties continued to stand in the way of resuming negotiations on the Syrian track.

Given all of the above, it is clear that the new Israeli concepts and ideas, which reflect Netanyahu's Torah-inspired ideas, are aimed at making Washington, the international community, and the Arabs forget about the past five years since the inception of the Madrid process, abandon the mechanisms and principles governing this process, and handle the efforts to achieve peace in the region on the basis of the new Israeli concepts. Netanyahu's Torah-inspired ideas reject any concessions on the issues of territory, withdrawal, and settlements, and insist on the forced enslavement of Arabs, the usurpation of their rights, and their capitulation. Nonetheless, the rulers in Tel Aviv and world leaders know that this is impossible to achieve. Likewise, they are well aware of the serious repercussions and consequences of such an eventuality and of the dangers it poses to peace, security, and stability.

Syria — which adopted peace as a strategic option, maintaining that it must be based on the Madrid conference terms of reference, the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and the land-for-peace formula — cannot abandon rights, bargain over them, or give up a single grain of its national soil. Likewise, under no circumstances can it accept a distorted peace that runs counter to its values, principles, and national and pan-Arab constants, and conflicts with the relevant international legitimacy resolutions, which are not amenable to deceitful interpretations or dilution. Syria cannot accept anything short of the restoration of all of the Golan, southern Lebanon, and other occupied Arab territory, and the withdrawal of Israeli troops to the 4 June 1967 borders.

Syria: Growth of Private Sector Industries Reported

JN3007183496 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 15 Jul 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus — The private industrial sector achieved a steady growth that has been reflected by the rise in its production and contribution to the national income alongside the public and mixed sectors. Today, the private sector produces a wide variety of commodities that meet the needs of the local market and export. During the past five years, capital investments rose from 10.824 billion to 29.477 billion Syrian pounds. In other words, investments increased almost threefold. During the same period, manpower also increased from 116,745 in 1991 to 139,382 in 1995.

Industries that depend on local raw materials and achieve high added value attracted most investments. Food industries, which numbered 4,404 in 1991 with a capital of 2.389 billion pounds, reached 5,198 in 1995 with a capital of 12.510 billion pounds. These industries, which had 20,204 workers in 1991, employed 24,434 workers in 1995. Chemical industries, which numbered 4,506 in 1991 with a capital of 3.002 billion pounds and a manpower of 15,380 workers, reached 5,476 in 1995 with a capital of 6.424 billion pounds and a manpower of 19,478 workers. Engineering industries, which numbered 8,487 in 1991 with a capital of 2.881 billion pounds and a manpower of 41,058 workers, reached 9,195 in 1995 with a capital of 5.497 billion pounds and a manpower of 45,484 workers. Textile industries, which numbered 15,474 in 1991 with a capital of 2.552 billion pounds and a manpower of 40,103 workers, reached 17,906 in 1995 with a capital of 5.046 billion pounds and a manpower of 49,986 workers.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: President Receives UN Envoy, Discusses Peace Efforts

LD3007172496 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of Afghanistan, this afternoon received Norbert Holl, the UN secretary general's special representative for Afghanistan.

During the meeting, the esteemed president expressed satisfaction with the appointment of Dr. Holl, who is familiar with Afghan affairs, as the UN special representative for Afghanistan and said: On behalf of the government and the people of Afghanistan, I support your efforts to ensure peace in Afghanistan.

Esteemed Rabbani said: I hope you will make efforts to secure a cessation of foreign interference and support intra-Afghan dialogue. [words indistinct] Expressing happiness at the transfer of the UN office to Jalalabad, he said: I hope the office will very soon be moved to Kabul.

At the end, Mr. Holl expressed his gratitude for being received by the president. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan: Iranian Official Delivers President's Message to Rabbani

LD3007185096 Tehran IRNA in English 1212 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, July 30, IRNA — Visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs 'Ala'eddin Boroujerdi on Tuesday [30 July] submitted President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's message to President Borhanoddin Rabbani. In the meeting, the sides also discussed relations between Tehran and Kabul, the latest developments in the war-torn country and important regional and global issues. Boroujerdi said that Iran is glad that the first step has been taken towards establishing overall peace in Afghanistan and that the Afghan cabinet ministers presided over by Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar meets regularly. The time has come for the Afghan Government to show it can reach understanding with other groups and opposition parties in Afghanistan, he added. He also explained the attitude of Iranian officials on regional and international developments. President Rabbani on his part stressed that Iran's constant attention to the problems of Afghanistan is a major factor in restoring peace and stability to Afghanistan. The Afghan president also said that the Islamic Government of Afghanistan is ready to reach understanding with opposition groups as an inevitable measure to establish peace in the war-torn country. In related news, the Iranian official also had a separate meeting with commander of Afghan armed forces Ahmad Shah Masud where the two discussed the latest developments in Afghanistan and the country's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the meeting, Shah Masud praised Iran for its efforts to bring peace to the region, noting that the continuation of such endeavors is a must for restoring peace and stability to Afghanistan. He said that the countries trying to bring peace to Afghanistan are the true friends of the Afghan people. Expressing optimism about the future of his country, the commander commented that problems in Afghanistan will be overcome one by one in the wake of cooperation between the government and the people. Boroujerdi, on his part said that Iran will continue its efforts to bring peace to Afghanistan and help it with its reconstruction, as it had previously stood side by side with it's Muslim brothers during the hard years of jihad.

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Wants Mahipar Accord Completely Implemented

LD3007165296 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto 0730 GMT 30 Jul 96 to Afghanistan

[FBIS Translated Text] The authority and duties of the president, prime minister, and other government offices were defined by the Mahipar agreement; the agreement must be implemented in its entirety.

Quoting a responsible Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] source, the SHAHADAT newspaper [the organ of Hezb-e Eslami] wrote on 29 July: The Mahipar agreement signed by President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Hekmatyar must be implemented word for word because the contents of the agreement were drafted, taking account of the circumstances, in such a way as to restore peace and make progress toward a positive change in the country.

The authority and jurisdiction of the president and the prime minister of the country as well as of other government departments have been completely and specifically defined. The agreement has left no complications or ambiguities in this respect. The full text of the agreement must be published as an official and credible government and state [as heard] document.

The responsible Hezb-e Eslami source added that vigorous efforts must be made to ensure the Hezb-Jam'iyat alliance experience was a successful one. Only then can other members of the High Coordination Council join the peace process with confidence and certainty. The source said: Hezb did not enter Kabul to acquire power and privilege but to bring about a positive change in the country and to resolve the problems of our oppressed nation and thereby end the crisis in our beloved country. It will apply its power and capabilities with full seriousness and vehemence to achieve this goal.

India

India: Gujral Ridicules Idea of Future Sanctions Over CTBT

BK3007153596 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 30 Jul 96 p 6

[Report by Mahendra Ved]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "India is standing on its feet. We are a proud nation. We are not going to let anyone push us around," External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral said on Monday [29 July] as Conference on Disarmament resumed crucial discussions in Geneva on the draft Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

He ridiculed suggestions about India being isolated or likelihood of sanctions from CTBT signatories in future. He denied that there were any pressures from the United States or other nations with whom "we are willing to disagree and differ."

"Diplomacy does not proceed on pressures. Pressures are applied on satellites not on sovereign nations," he told The Times of India.

Of the score of Foreign Ministers he had met in Jakarta last week, including US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, "I cannot think of anyone being less than cordial" on the CTBT issue.

"Everyone has a point of view. There is no scope for a single-point relationship between nations in today's world," he told The Times of India.

Of Mr Christopher, Mr Gujral said at the end of one-to-one talk in Jakarta, "I do not think there was any confusion in their mind or ours. And that is why we are agreeing to disagree."

"But I must say, Mr Christopher was most agreeable and I was able to communicate our point of view most effectively. Indo-US relations have a wider canvas and our bilateral relations remain most cordial."

Mr Gujral appeared to be using defensive but firm language on the issue. On his immediate plans, he said he would get back to the 20 foreign ministers he had met in Jakarta "and many more, if need be."

"We will unfold our plans to communicate our stand, which is already well-known, as things develop at Geneva," he said.

He parried a direct reaction to reports that Russia might change its stand on the CTBT.

India: External Affairs Ministry Officials Further View CTBT

BK3007155496 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 30 Jul 96 pp 1, 9

[Report by Nirmala George]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India is determined to block the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty if the nuclear powers press ahead with the current draft at the disarmament negotiations, which resumed in Geneva today. It saw a ray of hope in other dissenting voices, among them China's, Iran's and Mexico's.

"This treaty is defective and we will block it unless the Conference on Disarmament agrees to renegotiate the existing draft. We will make our unambiguous dissent clear in a manner that makes it evident there is no consensus behind this text", a top Ministry of External Affairs [MEA] official said.

The first round of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) ended with India's objections on global disarmament and its national security concerns being ignored altogether. The nuclear weapons powers, or the P-5, have sought to rope India in through an Entry into Force (EIF) provision, which makes it compulsory for India to sign the treaty for it to become effective.

While India's had been the lone voice opposing the draft treaty presented by Conference chairman Jaap Raamaker, the Conference has resumed with a plethora of dissenting voices, MEA sources said.

China has raised objections to the verification regime and on site inspections being pushed through by the US, through the National Technical Means (NTM) mechanism.

The NTM is a euphemism for the American spy satellite system. "This is one of the key areas where the Chinese would find it very difficult to accept the draft treaty. Beijing is determined to make a bid to improve the text", the sources said.

Unhappiness with the draft has also been articulated by the G-21 grouping of non-aligned countries, led by Mexico, which find both the Preamble and Scope of the treaty text deficient on the issue of global disarmament.

MEA's reading of the situation is that Mexico would call for a reopening of the draft text and amendments to be worked in.

Yet another spoke in the wheel has been thrust by Iran, which is objecting to Israel being clubbed with the Middle East countries. "The Iranians are adamant on rejecting Israel's inclusion in the middle-Eastern grouping, and this could be a sticking point when it is Israel's turn to represent the Middle East in the Executive Council of the CTBT organisation", MEA officials said.

In an unexpected development, the European Parliament has expressed the view that the existing EIF provisions are much too complicated to be implemented successfully. The European Parliament, in a resolution today, urged the adoption of "less complicated" EIF provisions which would allow the Treaty to enter into force at the earliest possible date.

Even more surprising, analysts here point out, was the singling out of Britain in the resolution, upbraiding it for "making higher demands for the EIF of the Treaty than other nations" .

"This is perhaps the first time that the European Parliament has criticised a fellow country by name, accusing it of taking a tougher line", the analyst said.

India is determined that it "will raise objections at every level" whether at the ad hoc committee where the CTBT draft is thrashed out or at the informal level, if Ramaaker decides not to convene the ad hoc committee in view of too many dissenting voices. "We do not see any real prospects today of any favourable change in the treaty text", the MEA sources said.

The emerging trend, where China, the G-21 countries or Iran may raise its objections, could result in a situation where the draft is reworked. "If the text is to be reopened, then it gives us the potential for further negotiations", Ministry sources said, adding, "they know that if there is any tendency to accommodate other dissenting voices, they also have to deal with India".

Meanwhile the US, Russia, UK and France are expected to issue a joint statement endorsing the current text of the CTBT.

"India's argument that the treaty should concern not just nuclear non-proliferation but the larger issue of worldwide nuclear disarmament is a fundamental one. This has not been easy for the nuclear heavies to assimilate", the official said.

But any hopes that China or the other countries may press for a reopening of the treaty draft is tempered with the realisation that though countries may be grumbling now, they may work out other deals on the side and cave in when it comes to the crunch, as has happened in the past.

India: Article Views 'Lesson' of PRC Nuclear Test

BK3007153796 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 30 Jul 96 p 9

[Article by C. Uday Bhaskar: "The Chinese Test: Nations Should Stand Firm Where National Interest Is Involved"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] China's 45th nuclear test conducted on Monday [29 July] has that characteristic Sinic flavour about it — a wry sense of timing — as has often been the case with Beijing's nuclear tests.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) negotiations resumed in Geneva under the aegis of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on the same day in what has been described as the last lap before the Treaty goes to the United Nations and China which was negotiating from a position of considerable strength has finally played its last trump card.

This 45th test is reported to be China's last test and as of now Beijing joins France and the other two nuclear-test capable nations —the US and Russia in agreeing to cease nuclear explosive testing. The UK while being a nuclear weapon power has no independent testing status and is tied to the US position on this issue.

What is instructive is the manner in which China and the other nuclear weapon states (NWS) have conducted the CTBT negotiations to obtain the greatest advantage under the prevailing global circumstances to further their respective security interests and assuage sensitivities — both ingredients being essential to a major power.

The corollary that follows is the relevance of these inferences for India which is currently being painted into a corner in Geneva at the CTBT negotiations by the nuclear weapon powers and the global media.

China entered the CTBT negotiations that commenced in January 1994 with what may be termed a maxima list position it made no commitment to stop testing but drew attention to the fact that it had conducted barely 40 tests while the US and Russia had accounted for thousands of nuclear tests; wanted to retain the right to peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs) and the furtherance of the peaceful use of nuclear energy; insisted on the inclusion of certain binding language in the entry-into-force [EIF] clause and the deletion of some clauses in verification mechanisms and on-site-inspections; sought specific commitments on security assurances and adherence to a no first-use doctrine from the other NWS; and finally wanted linkages of the CTBT with other international agreements.

In each instance, China was keenly aware of the impact of each of these clauses and their interpretation on its own security and the kind of politico diplomatic space it had for maneuver in the CD.

After almost 30 months of painstaking negotiations, when the CD adjourned June end with a "clean text" to meet again a month later, the Chinese Ambassador Sha Zukang [name and title as published] still felt it necessary to add that though "major progress" had been made on the CTBT draft, there were some "divergent positions" and that in the light of its own security interests, China would be putting forward amendments to the Chair's text.

Thus China is yet to give the final nod to the CTBT and will seek to wrest more concessions in the current deliberations though what it has already traded is not insignificant.

As of now China has been able to retain the EIF clause it wanted — no doubt supported by UK and Russia — which incidentally is the main clause detrimental to the Indian interest. It merits notice that the USA had initially not wanted such a restrictive EIF that would have made the CTBT contingent upon India and the other threshold states but went along with the majority view of the NWS — namely UK, Russia and China.

From China's security perspective, any permanent fetter on India's future testing abilities would be a desirable development and is hence logical.

Simultaneously, China has struck a compromise on its PNE clause and with no backers for its position, a face-saving mod us has been evolved where by as per para 1 of Article VIII to the Ramaker draft, after ten years after the CTBT comes into force, there will be a review of the whole PNE issue. On the verification issue, the draft omitted electromagnetic pulse (EMP) and satellite detection measures in deference to Beijing's wishes, though noble gas monitoring has been retained. Similarly on the on-site-inspection (OSI), China supported by Pakistan are pressing for a two-thirds majority as opposed to the simple majority sought by the US—and appear to have prevailed.

And finally, in what must be the greatest cynicism that accompanies nuclear deliberations where the non-nuclear weapon states have been reduced to impotence, China has dropped its insistence on binding no-first-use commitments from the NWS.

As part of the trading between the NWS, the Chinese Ambassador to the CD Mr Sha noted in June that China, "in another gesture of flexibility" to the wishes of the other NWS has agreed to withdraw China's proposal for separate articles referring to security assurances and no first use—and that these could now be reflected in the preamble—which as all arms control negotiators know is non-binding and cosmetic.

If these are the broad contours of the Chinese position on the CTBT and the skiliful manner in which it has played its cards, two facts stand out after the end of the 45th Chinese nuclear test. As of now all the declared nuclear powers are committed to a cessation of explosive nuclear testing—in other words, a mini CTBT has been realized—turning the spotlight on the threshold states—India, Pakistan and Israel.

Among them India is the only nation with a proven technological capability and has a unique nuclear security environment with a declared nuclear power and a clandestine nuclear power given to abetting cross-border terrorism as its neighbors. In this ambience, every improvement in Beijing's nuclear/missile capability pushes India further down the ladder of subalternity vis-a-vis China.

The true degree of security conferred by nuclear weapons is moot and is evidenced for instance in the insecurity exuded by the world's lone military superpower, the USA despite its over-whelming nuclear and conventional arms capability. Yet no one disputes the validity of the insecurity evoked by the mere presence, or possible presence of such capability with a distantly potential adversary.

This tenet informs the post Cold War strategic doctrine of the major powers and this is reflected in the manner in which they have steered global arms control negotiations—be it the NPT [nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty], the CTBT or the treaties to follow. To a large extent treaties are shaped, entered into and rejected or breached to protect the core interests of the dominant players on the global stage. China along with the other big boys has just demonstrated this tenet of how to manage global anarchy in an intrinsically iniquitous world.

There will be considerable pressure on India at the CTBT to compromise on what it perceives to be its core national interest including the much bandied about red herring that India has lived with the Chinese bomb for four decades and that this does not really constitute a threat. Yes, India has lived with this imbalance but uncomfortably and with decreasing dignity. The mere presence of a nuclear weapon capability deforms the politico-military space available to a subordinate nation-state as India has realized in its dealings with the NWS over the years.

Is there is a lesson from the Chinese test, it is that determined nations dig their heels in when the national interest is involved and that deals can be struck to further this interest.

India: Olympic Terrorism Illustrates U.S. 'Susceptible to Terrorism'

BK3107032296 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 30 Jul 96 p 10

[Editorial: "Reap as You Sow"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The American populace has had the misfortune to face two presumed acts of terrorism in the span of ten days—the downing of the flight TW 800 on the US coast and the pipe bomb explosion in the Atlanta centennial Olympic Park. As a people who have perhaps been the worst victims of terrorism, the Americans deserve our full sympathy. It is to be hoped that the perpetrators of these outrages will be brought to book. The world is particularly anxious about the downing of the TW 800 aircraft, which appears to have been executed with the deliberate aim of creating a scare among the American people. The aircraft crashed off the US coast unlike Air India's "Kanishka". It would be bad enough if the flight had been sabotaged by an explosive placed in the forward cargo hold, but the implications of the alternative hypothesis—that it may have been brought down by a surface-to-air missile—are far more serious. The first would vindicate a security lapse at the airport which is remediable at some cost and inconvenience to the travelling public. The second hypothesis, if proved, would certainly raise questions about the reckless distribution of surface-to-air missiles to Mujahideen groups during the Afghan war and their subsequent transfer to terrorist organisations across the globe. While the world will shave to wait for a firm finding, the incidents demonstrate the shortsightedness of actions based on such one-dimensional considerations and their serious repercussions on international security.

The Atlanta Olympic park bombing is of a piece with those that rocked the New York World Trade Centre and the Oklahoma Federal building. Unfortunately, the US lends itself to terroristic outrages mainly because the US media serves an essential part of the terrorists' objective by overreacting to them. The American industrialised society offers a large number of prestigious and high population density targets especially vulnerable to terrorist attacks. The cost exchange ratio between terrorism and measures to counter it is extremely unfavourable to any society attempting to develop the countermeasures. America being a salad bowl of a large number of unassimilated communities, the tradition of violence, and its continued depiction on TV and cinema are factors which render the United States susceptible to terrorism. The ultimate immunity to terrorism has to be derived from societal values and attitudes and this cannot happen in a milieu which permits the burning down of black churches and the emergence of militias with racial supremacist ideologies and where the jails harbour one million convicts and an equivalent number are out on parole and probation. Terrorism is an international problem and needs an international consensual approach to be tackled.

India: Article on 'Wassenaar Arrangement,' Receipt of Russian Arms

BK2907133196 Madras THE HINDU in English 29 Jul 96 p X

[Article by Atul Aneja: "Russia Takes Part in Western Move Against Arms Transfer"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For the first time, Russia and key Eastern European States are taking part in a restrictive Western arrangement, governing conventional weapon and know-how transfers to global trouble spots. But, Moscow's presence notwithstanding, internal differences among the grouping members is unlikely to affect Indian military hardware and technology acquisitions according to highly-placed sources here.

The 33-member club, christened the Wassenaar arrangement, succeeds the cold war vintage, the Coordination Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM). But unlike COCOM, which was erected to deny sophisticated know-how to the Communist bloc, the Wassenaar, named after a village in Holland is a flexible arrangement which at the moment targets the "rogue states", Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea. The presence of Russia, which has a recent history of military hardware trade, specially with Iran and Iraq, has been deliberately sought to tighten curbs on these countries. "The idea of getting Russia on board is to stem the flow of conventional arms to these countries", the sources said. Russia, for instance, has contracted sales of Kilo class submarines with Iran. Moscow has also negotiated setting up nuclear reactors at Bushehr on Iranian soil.

A key munitions and a dual use list are the pillars of the Wassenaar arrangement. The munitions list is a compilation of all proscribed arms. The dual use list includes all military useful know-how, including some machine tools.

Despite its West Asian and Asia-Pacific orientation, there is nothing to prevent theoretically the newly-formed grouping from targeting India at a later stage, though practical considerations at may discourage this. "The targeting is driven by political considerations and could vary," the sources said. "The purpose of the arrangement... is to contribute to regional and international security by promoting transparency and greater responsibility with regard to transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, thus preventing destabilising accumulations," says a "Fact Sheet" circulated by the U.S. Government.

India can be targeted

The formulation could be turned around against India, as several official U.S. reports have pointed to the destabilising spin-offs of Indian and Pakistani nuclear and missile programmes, the sources said.

Restrictions by Russia, India's key defence partner, could hurt most but "special political ties" and commercial considerations between New Delhi and Moscow are unlikely to let this happen. "There is a unique relationship between India and Russia. Annual sales of Russia to India are a couple of billion dollars, losing which Moscow may find unaffordable," a source said. An increasingly cash strapped West is unlikely to compensate Russia for this.

Western leverage over Russia to ensure its compliance against targeted countries may also be exaggerated. "Only 10 to 15 percent of what the West has promised Russia has materialised, forcing Moscow to take an independent look to promote its national interests," the sources said.

The "institutional crisis" in Russia will also stand in way of implementing political decisions, driven by a multilateral understanding. "A system" to monitor exports is yet to be fully evolved, creating several openings for "cash and carry" arrangements, a source said.

Stiff commercial competition between the European countries and the U.S., reflected in a pruned Wassenaar dual use list also keeps open the possibility of hi-technology imports. "The dual use list presented by the European Union in December last included know-how which was not related to missiles or weapons of mass destruction," a source said. In fact, sources anticipate a "very truncated" final list under the Wassenaar arrangement.

Several member-countries, outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) which have little to gain from joining the arrangement, may open yet another channel for technology "leakages." "Arrangements such as the Wassenaar and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) are centred around NATO members. Others outside this charmed circle are unlikely to get access to state-of-the-art know how. "There is not much of a carrot for them," the sources added. It may be possible to breach their political commitment to the Wassenaar norms. Bulgaria and Ukraine are part of the new arrangement, which also includes Argentina, Australia, Canada, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, the U.S., the U.K. and Japan.

India: PTV—Civil Servants To Boycott Kashmir Poll Duties

BK2907151496 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, 'Id Milad al-Nabi, Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam, [birthday of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him] was celebrated with due solemnity, but Indian forces disallowed processions and imposed restrictions on the free movement of people. Section 144 [banning assembly of five or more persons] was enforced to ban the taking out of 'Id-i-Milad processions. However, indoor gatherings were held to highlight the teachings of the holy Prophet, Sallallaho Alaihe Osallam. The largest gathering was held at Hazratbal shrine where thousands of devotees offered Darud-o-Salam [prayers] and recited the holy Koran. Touching scenes were witnessed as the people prayed for almighty Allah's help for the success of the struggle of the Kashmiris for their right of self-determination.

Another report says government employees have decided to boycott official poll duties during the forthcoming sham elections of the legislative assembly. A spokesman of the government employees organization in Srinagar said they will disobey official orders as elections could not be a substitute to the exercise of the right of self-determination for the Kashmiri people.

Meanwhile, the death toll in the Anantnag-Islamabad explosion has risen to seven as another person died. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has condemned this act of terrorism and expressed deep anguish at the loss of life. As Indian occupation forces continued their repressive operations, seven more people were killed in different areas of Indian-held Kashmir.

India: India's Need for National Security Council Viewed

BK3007125796 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 30 Jul 96 p 11

[Article by Raja Menon: "Strategic Decisionmaking"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] We have a new Defence Minister and a new External Affairs Minister. The latter has already stated his intention to push for some kind of a national decision-making body like the American National Security Council (NSC), thereby reviving hopes that strategic decision making in Delhi will be more cohesive and less furtive than it has been in the past. Both Ministers have an excellent opportunity to learn from the latest international event of China exploding a nuclear device while the world is allegedly on the threshold of a CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty]. Indian commentators predicted that had India done the same, the country would have been visited by both unbearable military and economic sanctions. Of course the issue was never debated in a knowledgeable forum and that has been the characteristic of all our missed opportunities.

The desperation of many government officers working at the field level finds occasional expression in the national newspapers when a senior policeman recently expressed his disgust at constantly having to catch crooks trying to beat stupid economic barriers set up by Finance Ministry officials unaware of all the downstream effects of their policies. Indeed, all the RDX [Research Department Explosive] that came by sea for the Mumbai [Bombay] blasts would hardly have been possible but for the ridiculous gold control orders set in place decades earlier, which set in train a vast smuggling conglomerate based in Dubai. The absence of a multi-disciplinary body has therefore been felt for some time. However, having been associated with trying to push the proposal some years earlier, there appears to be no surety that this time around also, the files will not be routed into innumerable cul-de-sacs by various Applebys.

One such cul-de-sac was that since there is a committee of secretaries, what is different about an NSC? This could only be answered by someone who has attended a meeting of the committee, to discover that a good many of them come to the meeting so disoriented from other meetings that it was always a case of "If it's a Tuesday this must be Belgium." The biggest two drawbacks to using the committee of secretaries was that first, none of them were specialists in any field except for the diplomats. The idea of using secretaries to advise the senior executive was patently absurd since they themselves needed the help of specialists.

The second was that this committee was not a permanent body and had no secretariat and worst of all no corporate memory. But the ploy of using the committee of secretaries, as the defence against restructuring of any kind is an old one in Delhi's power circles. Another cul-de-sac was to use the joint intelligence committee (JIC) as the permanent staff to a National Security Council since, the argument, went, all the NSC needed was intelligence, to help them make up their minds. Intelligence or rather, human intelligence, is indeed important, but is only one of the seven or eight specialisations that normally go into the structure of any NSC.

It must be apparent that if the NSC proposal was being led into various cul-de-sacs, there must have been somebody deliberately doing so. This is how we finally come to the Devil theory, for after all, if everyone wants something badly enough, and it does not come to pass, there must be a devil working surreptitiously against it. This is not so surreptitious a theory actually, because a senior bureaucrat was openly contemptuous of the success of our first attempt, and showed his hostility openly to any such body as being a serious invasion of his turf. He was merely expressing what in fact is reality in North and South Block. The sum total of power there is a constant, and no new body can be created without taking a bit of power away from somebody who has it now. If the NSC has not happened so far, it is not purely because of the lack of a political will, or the lack of erudition on the part of some ministers. There is a strong, vigorous and Machiavellian bureaucratic lobby that will do its utmost to prevent the NSC from appearing because such a body will be powerful, transparent and take some of the decision-making powers away from the secretaries into the modern world of matrices, quantitative analyses, game theory and scientific scrutiny — all of them being areas the generalist bureaucrat is ill at ease with.

If Inder Gujral seriously means what he says, he has a bigger fight on his hands than he imagines. When the American NSC was rejuvenated with strong personalities like Kissinger, at the height of the Vietnam crisis, the department most affected by a loss of power was the State Department, which allegedly had failed (rightly or wrongly) to address the country's security issues with greater urgency. So when it comes to an NSC in Delhi it is inconceivable that the bureaucrats will not close ranks, and the foreign service will therefore join their IAS [Indian Administrative Service] colleagues in "putting into orbit", (as South Block jargon goes) the NSC file. For strategic decision making, India is passing through an extraordinarily bad time. Deve Gowda has his work cut out for him learning the ropes of being the country's Prime Minister and his reliance on his Principal Secretary and Cabinet Secretary will be so heavy as to leave these gentlemen holding many of the reins. Mulayam Singh Yadav, street smart though he may be, has anxiety writ large on his face already, and the cliches he has come up with about "befitting replies" leaves little to the imagination on who is his speech writer. Perhaps a party with a stronger ideology like the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] or a minister with a record of independent thinking like V.P. Singh may have succeeded in forcing an NSC through an unwilling and sullen bureaucracy, but the man to match this job does not exist in the UF [United Front] Ministry.

This is a great pity. Consider the offer made by Benazir Bhutto to the UF Government. An answer involves so many disciplines, like defence, territorial, terrorism, consular and transit, civil aviation, commerce, narcotics, fishing and the maritime boundary, industry and culture. For the people of India to be told that the Foreign Ministry is cobbling together a suitable reply immediately after the vote of confidence leaves one appalled, because the Indian people are just as mystified as the Pakistan Government as to what the stand of the Indian Government is on all these issues. Each one impinges on the other and if a total position is to be taken on the basis of files running through these ministries, (which is what the bureaucrats want) the Pakistanis will remain as confused as we are on what the new initiatives of the UF Ministry are. On the other hand if representatives of all these ministries react to project a comprehensive initiative, it virtually amounts to National Security Council, with the absence of a permanent national security staff.

The Indian bureaucracy is here to stay and cannot be wished away, so perhaps some of its anxieties need to be addressed in forming an NSC. The parliamentary system is adequately protected in the Constitution and obviously an NSC is not intended to bypass it, thereby surreptitiously creating an extra- constitutional authority — which in fact the PMO [Prime Minister's Office], in its present avatar is. The NSC will never have an executive wing and the nearest it can possibly come to actually doing anything, is the cell it could contain to monitor that the executive's own writ is being complied with.

The actual council only meets occasionally to consider the work done by its staff, and in the parliamentary system, the members are likely to be senior ministers, with outside expertise. The strength of the NSC, however, lies in the staff who are from different disciplines, like the military, police, finance, external affairs, scientific, customs, intelligence (internal and external) and administration. A position paper on any of the country's difficult problems written by a body selected from among these people need go no further, needs no processing and gives the executive, alternatives to choose from. The paper would not be written without incorporating the official view of the ministry most concerned, and therefore no office in the parliamentary system will be bypassed. True, the staff consists of experts, in which a generalist has no place and herein lies the issue which drives the bureaucratic lobby to despair, for it sees its days are numbered, which is obviously not true. It can continue to prosper in the ministries and to lead PSUs [Public Sector Units] into the red. Bureaucrats need to be reassured that they can continue to do so, if they don't assassinate the NSC in one of South Block's dark corridors.

Today's security environment requires that the people negotiating on behalf of the country be trained in that art. They also need to be supported by a variety of flexible stands where a bit of give here can mean the same amount of take somewhere else. A concession to Pakistan on the Sir Creek for instance could result in a quid pro quo at Wular or in Slacken. Solving both could be made conditional to trade concessions to Pakistan that result in the overall reduction of tariff barriers. No single government or private department like the MEA [Ministry of External Affairs] or FICCI [Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry] can know enough to be part of an overall negotiation plan. The country desperately needs an NSC, but can the UF Government deliver?

India: Rao Says Court Ruling To Have 'No Impact' on Congress Party

BK3007161996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Delhi High Court today upheld the order of the chief metropolitan magistrate [CMM] summoning the former prime minister, Mr. Narasima Rao, as a coaccused in the Lakhubhai Pathak cheating case. Dismissing the Congress president's petition challenging the order, Mr. Justice Mahajan said the magistrate has not abused his power by summoning the former prime minister. In a 16-page order, the judge observed that it cannot be said that there is no material before the CMM to come to a prima facie finding about the complicity of Mr. Rao in the case. Mr. Justice Mahajan also said that Mr. Narasimha Rao could approach the lower court for necessary remedies in the case.

Mr. Rao was summoned by the CMM to appear before him on the 24th of this month. However, as Mr. Rao's appeal against the summons was pending before the high court, the CMM had asked Mr. Rao to appear before him on the second of next month. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the general secretary of the Congress party, Mr. Devendra Dwevedi, said in all probability Mr. Rao will move the Supreme Court against the Delhi High Court's order.

Talking to a select group of journalists in New Delhi this evening, Mr. Rao said he was not present in New York on the dates on which it is alleged that he assured Mr. Lakhubhai Pathak some favor. Referring to the high court judgment in the case today, Mr. Rao said we are bound by law and the law will take its own course. Answering another question, Mr. Rao said today's judgment will have no impact on the party.

India: Finance Minister Rules out Mass Consumption Goods Tax

BK2907132796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The finance minister says the present government at the Center is committed not to imposing any tax on goods of mass consumption. Speaking on the union budget for 1996-97 at a function organized by the Tamil Maanila Congress in Madras today, Mr. P. Chidambaram said the main thrust of the budget is to give a fresh impetus to the overall economic growth and speed up the process of liberalization. Expressing concern at the decline in public investment in the agricultural sector, he said large concessions have been given in the budget to boost profitable crop production. The union minister of state for personnel and public grievances, Mr. S.R. Balasubramaniam, and the Tamil Maanila Congress leader, Mr. G.K. Moopanar, also spoke on the occasion.

The Kerala Government says the Center's decision to allow concession on import duty on edible oil and other items will adversely affect the economy of the state. The agriculture minister, Mr. V.K. Rajan, told the state assembly today that the chief minister will meet the prime minister and other union ministers to discuss the issue and will submit a memorandum to the Center. He said the chief minister has convened a meeting of all MP's from Kerala in New Delhi tomorrow to discuss the matter. The Congress-led opposition staged a walkout in the assembly to protest against the disallowing of an adjournment motion on the issue. The opposition demanded that the house should pass a resolution urging the Center to withdraw the import duty concession. Opposition leaders have sent a joint telegram to the prime minister, urging for the immediate withdrawal of the reduction in the import duty on edible oil and other cash crops.

India: Article Views Obstacle to Foreign Capital

BK2907123996 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 29 Jul 96 p 10

[Article by Nani A. Palkhivala: "Union Budget-IV Proposed Section 115JA Is an Intruder"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The one provision of the Finance Bill, 1996 which is bound to prove the greatest obstacle in the way of attracting foreign capital is the proposed Section 115JA (tax on companies which have no taxable income). This article is confined to the Minimum Alternative Tax (MAT) embodied in Section 115JA proposed to be inserted in the Income-tax Act.

An acutely perceptive foreigner remarked the other day that he was amazed at the "compartmentalised" attitude of the Indian government. He said that he could understand a civil servant in charge of income-tax being oblivious of the benefits arising to the state from customs or excise revenues. But surely the finance minister is supposed to take an overall national view and is not to be concerned with only one tax, viz. income-tax.

Worst Fiscal System

Mr. P. Chidambaram is one of the foremost lawyers in India today and it is surprising that he should be the author of the proposed Section 115JA which is an amended version of the old Section 115J which was patently an intruder in the Income-tax Act. The old Section 115J was wisely abolished by the Union budget 1990 and it is now sought to be whimsically resuscitated. Has the finance ministry collected the statistics regarding the pending matters under the old Section 115J where the decision has yet to be given by the High Court regarding the validity of that Section?

A company which has no taxable income becomes taxable under the proposed Section 115JA in respect of its book profits. Any scheme of taxing a company which has no taxable income must necessarily involve tax at a rate which wanders in the realm of the infinite. Take two individuals, each with an income of Rs. [rupees] 1 lakh. One of them pays income-tax and spends the balance of his income. The other invests his earnings in tax-free bonds, national savings, public provident fund, etc. and has no taxable income. Do you admire the second or do you denigrate him as a zero-tax individual?

In point of complexity and poor quality of administration, our direct tax laws — with the myriad rules and notifications which are beyond count or care — must surely rank as the very worst fiscal system in the Third World. If taxpayers were dogs, the officials of the finance ministry would undoubtedly be convicted under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

G.K. Chesterton, in his brilliant essay, The Mad Official, analyses how a society goes mad. The rot begins, he says, when wild actions are received calmly by society. "These are people that have lost the power of astonishment at their own actions. When they give birth to a fantastic passion or foolish law, they do not start or stare at the monster they have brought forth ... These nations are really in danger of going off their heads en masse, of becoming one vast vision of imbecility." India is one such country in respect of budgeting and fiscal laws. After the 1996 budget, the monster of our tax structure will become even more monstrous.

The proposed Section 115JA is, in my opinion, constitutionally illegal, economically unsound and morally repugnant. It violates Article 14 of the Constitution inasmuch as (a) it hits only limited companies and thus discriminates against them as compared to other categories of taxpayers, and (b) it discriminates between companies which have adopted the straightline method of depreciation in their books and others which have adopted the written-down value basis. It further violates Article 19 of the Constitution because it imposes a burdensome restriction on the company's right to carry on business and account for its profits to its shareholders in its own way which restriction is neither reasonable nor in the public interest.

A company may have carried forward losses for tax purposes, but if in the relevant accounting year it shows a profit in the profit and loss account, it would become liable to tax regardless of past losses which may be large enough to reduce the real taxable income to nil. A company may have adopted the regular method of straight-line depreciation (as it is entitled to do under the Companies Act, 1956) and this method may enable the company to show a profit in the profit and loss account, when in fact there is no taxable income on the written-down value method of depreciation which is obligatory in every case under the Income-tax Act: but without deducting even such normal income-tax depreciation the company would be caught by the proposed Section.

Three-Word Maxim

A company may merely revalue its old land and buildings on the market value basis and take credit for the excess over cost in its profit and loss account: it would find itself liable to tax on such unrealised excess which is not its income at all. A company may not debit to its profit and loss account the capital expenditure on scientific research and development which is fully deductible for tax purposes under Section 35; it would become assessable to tax and would be virtually deprived of the right to such legitimate deduction. The force of tyranny can no further go.

If we are interested in growth, let us remember that among the companies to be hit by the proposed Section 115JA would be some of the most dynamic enterprises in our corporate sector. They undertake plans of development and expansion which result in capital formation, productive investment, increased employment and larger revenues for the Union and the states by way of customs, excise, sales tax, etc. Economists seldom agree with one another but there is a three-word maxim on which all economists are totally agreed, namely, investment produces employment. Now it is proposed to penalise with a vengeance the so-called "zero-tax companies"—those very companies which make the maximum investment and contribute most to employment and capital formation, and generate the largest revenues for government by way of indirect taxes.

Actual Facts

As an example, I shall take the actual facts of a well-known manufacturing company. That company did not pay any income-tax for six years. But at the end of that period it was employing 10,000 more persons (the number increased from 30,000 to 40,000) and the aggregate amount of tax paid by it annually by way of excise, customs, sales tax and octroi was Rs.295 crore as against Rs.89 crore at the beginning of the six-year period. Could it possibly be said that the company was not making its fair contribution to the national exchequer?

The mistake lies in shutting one's eyes to the total tax burden discharged by a company and focussing attention only on income-tax. In other countries such vigorous and high-powered companies are put on the roll of honour as national benefactors. But, in India, our fiscal administrators look with great disfavour upon these fast growing companies.

There is one other point which is of overriding importance. How can a foreigner have faith in the government of India and proceed to invest in this country when he knows that the entire scheme of the computation of income for income tax purposes can be set at nought without any prior notice, by just one new section, as is sought to be done by the proposed Section 115JA?

The Union budget should not be a scourge but should take on more of the nature of the presentation of annual accounts of a partnership between the government and the people. In the presentation of such annual accounts, good faith and a sense of honour are essential if the partners are to have confidence in each other.

Iran

Iran: Clandestine Reports 'Much Damage' in 30 Jul Border Attack

NC3007172596 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1400 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed listeners. The savage onslaught by the mercenary forces of the clerical regime deep within the soil of Iraqi Kurdistan and against the headquarters of the political bureau of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kordestan [DPIK] and the Iranian refugees' camp has once again proven that the Islamic

Republic's regime does not recognize any boundaries in its opposition to the national democratic movement of the people of Kordestan. It shows that the regime is prepared to resort to all kinds of repressive activities, in contravention of all international norms and regulations, in order to tyrannize them.

On the evening of 26 July, the [words indistinct] with 200 armored vehicles entered Iraqi Kurdistan through Marivan, and, after traversing more than 250 kilometers inside the soil of Iraqi Kurdistan, deployed themselves on the heights of Qada Kuysanjaq. Subsequently, with cannons, mortars, and Katyushas, these troops attacked the refugee camps of Iranian Kords near Qada Kuysanjaq and the headquarters of the political bureau of the DPIK with heavy artillery fire.

During this heavy artillery barrage, a large number of residential units belonging to the refugees as well as the Azadi hospital, which had been serving the medical needs of these residents in a remarkable manner, were greatly damaged.

In continuation of this blatant aggression and criminal plot the regime's forces attacked the Iranian Kurds' refugee camp in Jirnakan, 5 kilometers from the city of Irbil in Iraqi Kurdistan, by means of cannons and Katyushas. These forces inflicted much damage on them on the afternoon of 30 July.

Similarly, as was mentioned in the DPIK political bureau's statement, due to the timely information on this plot by the regime and the prompt action by the DPIK and the Iranian Kord refugees, the [words indistinct] no losses were inflicted on the civilian inmates of the camp. [passage indistinct]

The United Nations officials called for (?a halt) to the onslaught by the Islamic Republic regime's forces on the defenseless Iranian Kordish refugees.

The Iraqi Government, in overt reaction to the aggression by the Islamic Republic of Iran, summoned the Iranian ambassador in Baghdad to the Foreign Ministry and handed him an official memorandum. He deemed the deployment of Iranian armed forces an overt act of aggression and called for their withdrawal as soon as possible. [passage indistinct]

The refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan abandoned their homes and sought shelter at the UN base in Irbil. These refugees called on the UN secretary general and international organizations to exert pressure on the Islamic Republic so that it would halt its artillery attacks and aggression against the soil of Iraqi Kurdistan as soon as possible.

Iran: UN Envoy—Tehran Reserves Right To Counter Border Attacks

LD3007192096 Tehran IRNA in English 0649 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, New York, July 30, IRNA — Iran's mission to the U.N. said the Islamic republic reserves the right to self-defense and counter the attacks on its border cities by anti-revolutionary groups from Iraqi territory.

In a letter Monday [29 July] to U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, Iran's representative to the U.N., Kamal Kharazi, said that under the prevailing circumstances, the government of Iraq is not in a position to exercise effective control over territory in the northern part of that country.

As a result, trans-border armed attacks and sabotage operations against Iranian border towns by terrorist groups originating from Iraqi territory, have escalated in recent weeks.

Stressing the attacks have caused numerous human casualties and material damage to the civilian population, he underlined that these incursive and cruel activities constituted a grave violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"In response to these encroachments by terrorist armed groups and in accordance with its inherent right to self-defense as enshrined in article 51 of the U.N. charter, Iran took immediate and proportional measures that were necessary to curb and suppress such aggressive activities" he added.

Iran's permanent representative to the U.N. also mentioned in his letter that on July 28, 1996, Iranian defense forces pursued retreating armed groups that attacked civilian targets in the border towns of Piranshahr, Mahahad and Orumiyeh in northwestern Iran and tgargeted their training camps in Iraq.

Kharazi, meanwhile, reiterated Iran's respect for the territorial integrity of Iraq.

Iran: Khamene'i—U.S. 'Will Be Hurt by Terrorism'

LD3007154796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0908 GMT 30 Jul 96

[Speech by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, to a unidentified radio and television staff at the Belal Mosque of the VVIRI — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [crowd chants: "The hand of God is on our head — Khamene'i is our leader"] Thank you very much; please sit down. In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The importance of the VVIRI [Voice and Vision of the Islamice Republic of Iran] to the Islamic Republic of Iran is especially significant. That is, the publicity machinery of any country and nation is the tongue of that nation and government. But, this importance varies in proportion to two factors that differ in the case of nations and countries. One of these factors is how a nation has so many things to say; or how a government has so much to say to its own people. This is one factor. The other is to what extent a nation can be turned into a target of criticism, hostile propaganda, and the poisoned bullets of enmity by other media. Some countries experience a limited degree of opposition by enemies, others a little more and others much more still.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran these two factors require greater attention and effort on the part of the VVIRI, because, firstly, the Islamic republic is an idea [andisheh], a new proposal to humankind — a humankind that is in dire need of this new proposal. It possesses a structure which is acceptable and capable of offering constructive and problem-solving thoughts and ideas, both for the people of the world and for its own people. This is the first factor. If you are familiar with world issues and look at the process of philosophical, social and political thought in the world, you will see that today, thoughts that are spiritual, solid, logical and wise, have a lot of customers in the world among people with intellect who rely on ideology.

The second factor, is the fact that Islamic republic has presented a new proposal [Islamic revolution] to the rulers of collections of global arrogance. Therefore, it has many enemies. There is much propaganda against the Islamic republic. Today there may be only a few countries or there may not be any country in the world which are to such an extent as Iran the target of such an organized onslaught by the Zionists, global arrogants, and publications which rely on money, politics, and the desire of these collections. They organize complicated thoughts in this respect and implement them. They pursue two aims: one to influence public opinion in Iran and the other to influence world public opinion. That is to say, for example, those news agencies which broadcast false and fabricated news reports about the Islamic Republic of Iran, their intention is not only to influence the opinion of people of Iran but their intention is more to influence world public opinion as well as nations and a number of government and political apparatuses. They want to influence these apparatuses too for obvious reasons.

The Islamic revolution of Iran, because it was a new message, was broadly reflected among nations, not only among the Islamic nations, but among all nations to some extent.

They cannot prevent the effects of the 17-year glories of a popular system, one which is reliant on spiritual values and on remaining pure and free of the type of corruption rife in political machinery, except through regular and orchestrated propaganda. Of course, there is a lot to say about the subject, which should be said, studied, and thought about.

Based on that summary one can understand the important role of the Voice and Vision in the Islamic Republic. And my visit today to this organization and its various sections and looking into the various details of its operations have in fact two aims. One is to show my gratitude for what has been done in the organization in recent years. A great deal of effort was made by the VVIRI during the Iran-Iraq war to raise the issue of the holy defense in the country. Very good and valuable work was done in those days.

In the last few years an industrious, strong, unified and principled effort, with good and clear aims, has been made in other areas. Its effects on the VVIRI are visible. And there are some actions which we hope will show their effects gradually in the near future, or in time. That was the first aim.

The second aim is to rely on a precise and visible endeavor, based on realities, to find efficient and effective ways of continuing this movement and advancing it; and to draw on the assistance of the country's different organs for the purposes of making up for shortages and shortcomings, as soon as possible and in the best possible way, so that the serious, faithful and industrious efforts of the VVIRI's officials could raise this media to the lofty position that is deserving of such an organization in the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is the aim.

I am, of course, due to have more meetings with the respected officials of the VVIRI in the next few hours. I will be visiting specific departments to offer the necessary guidelines to managers and directors.

What can be said to the people of Iran, today, is that the VVIRI has begun a good movement and this movement should continue. The Iranian nation and the system of the Islamic Republic need this, both on the internal and external fronts. People inside the country should really take advantage of this media as a public university and nations beyond these borders should feel and sense this clear voice; they should hear its voice and receive its message.

You can see that not a week goes by without the leaders of global arrogance harassing this nation, country and system with their poisonous, tyrannical [haq-kosh] arrows and their adverse propaganda.

Right now, because of terrorist incidents here and there in the world and in the United States of America itself, those who talk nonsense — international mercenary pens and people who take advantage of such incidents to write and tell lies for money, for their wages — started to point the finger of accusation toward the Iranian nation and the sacred Islamic system. Well, these things need a response. World public opinion is helpless and defenseless if there is no response to these lies. Who should give this reply? You see how this is among the heaviest responsibilities to be borne by the Voice and Vision in this connection and the organization should therefore expand its resources.

Terrorism is a bad thing. Terrorism contravenes and violates the security of every human being. This is understood by all the people of the world and all sound minds.

Today, fear of terrorism has cast its shadow everywhere in Western countries and, at their head, in the United States of America. Who is responsible for this terrifying situation? Who? Have they ever asked themselves this question? The leaders of Western countries will be meeting in a few day's time to talk about terrorism and to find the main culprit, or guess who it is. Will they be able to find out?

The day when the most horrific terrorist methods were deployed in this country, toward this nation — merely because of this nation's sin of wanting to live freely and independently — when people made the terrorists flee from the country, this same America opened its arms and gave them refuge. They welcomed them warmly; it did not make any difference to them whether these were terrorists who supported the corrupt monarchist regime, or the hypocrite [monafeq, reference to Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] terrorists, or Communist and infidel terrorists.

They have received terrorists, not as terrorists but as their guests and as people under their protection. We said then that the one who holds up a sword of revolt, will be killed by that sword himself. We have said that the fire will spread to you too. They did not believe us.

Today it has happened. Terrorism has been supported and extended by those who received with open arms in their countries terrorists, who had confessed to their terrorist actions and who are proud of it. They gave good and pure names to those impure elements.

This current president of the United States replied to a flattering letter written by a leader of a group of these terrorists. It was a friendly and an encouraging reply. The Americans gave them money and arranged for them to receive monthly allowances. There is an Arab saying on the customary law concerning what is allowed and what is not allowed: If terrorism is good then it should be good for everywhere. If you have fostered this rotten seed, then it does not need a specific area to grow. If even one seed is dropped anywhere, this fostered seed will grow. It was dropped on America, it developed. This is still the beginning of the work, more is to come.

All those countries which supported terrorism, especially the United States which has supported and is still supporting the terrorist regime of usurper Zionists of Palestine, will be hurt by terrorism. The process has begun. If they are truly sincere about finding the real cause and an offender of terrorism and the cause of the development of terrorism in the world, then they should pay attention to these facts. Of course they can afford not to pay attention, but then they will be unable to find a remedy for the illness. Who should say these facts for public opinion? This is the importance of the Voice and Vision.

You should value your work and make the most of it. Each one of you wherever you are and in whatever work you are engaged, you should do your best to carry out your work in a manner which will please God and will bring advancement to this country and this nation. I hope that God Almighty will too help you and the sacred presence of the Lord of the Age [the hidden Imam], may his soul be admitted to paradise, support you. May God's peace and blessing be upon you.

Iran: UN Envoy Calls Gingrich's Remarks on Iran 'Irresponsible'

LD3007191096 Tehran IRNA in English
0952 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, New York, July 30, IRNA — Iran's representative to the U.N. Kamal Kharazi stressed here Monday [29 July] night that the biased accusations made by the U.S. politician Newt Gingrich against Iran are clear cases of abusing the sentiments of the relatives of the victims of the TWA plan and the terrorist act of racist groups in Atlanta's Centennial Park.

In an interview with IRNA correspondent here, Kharazi added that Gingrich, the U.S. house speaker, is trying to take advantage of the existing atmosphere of tension in America to distract the public opinion from the present problems.

In an interview on Sunday with the NBC Television Network on the recent events in the U.S., Gingrich made repeated baseless accusations against the Islamic

Republic of Iran alleging it of supporting international terrorism.

Gingrich added that the U.S. should prove Iran's role in international terrorist acts to its European allies and added that Washington should also take appropriate measures against the Islamic Iran, if necessary.

In response to Gingrich's baseless accusations Kharazi noted that his remarks are nothing but repetition of the baseless claims of the past, falsity of which have always been proven. Kharazi stressed that raising these claims have nothing to do with the recent incidents in U.S.

Instead of resorting to such accusations against Middle East countries including Iran, Gingrich should have looked for the social causes which push certain American groups to acts of terrorism, incidents such as Oklahoma and Atlanta bombings.

Such accusations will not only fail to solve domestic problems of America but will also generate further hatred against U.S. among world Muslims, the Iranian envoy added.

Expressing his regret over the TWA flight crash and condemning the Atlanta bombing, Kharazi noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran, one of the main victims of terrorism, has repeatedly called for collective world efforts to uproot terrorism of all kind.

He further voiced Iran's readiness to help launch international efforts to eradicate terrorism from the face of the globe.

Kharazi stated that this irresponsible and baseless claims made by a U.S. official will lead to creation of tension in international relations.

He concluded that the Islamic Republic of Iran considers it as its own right to pursue the issue at relevant international bodies.

Iran: Helms-Burton 'Retreat' Said To Show EU-U.S. Policy Clash

NC2907103196 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 20 Jul 96 p 12

[Commentary by A. Abolfath: "The American President's Horrible Nightmare"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a dramatic retreat vis-a-vis his European allies, American President Bill Clinton agreed to postpone part of the Helms-Burton Act intensifying economic sanctions on Cuba. Thus the path was temporarily blocked for the American capitalists, who intended to file claims against foreign companies dealing with Cuba. Clinton has postponed the implementation of Article Three of this act, which was approved in Congress by the Republican Party. This has angered Republicans against Clinton on the eve of the presidential elections, since they claim the White House has surrendered to Castro's "dictatorship."

But the truth goes beyond joint American-Cuban relations. It goes back to the White House's weakness in front of Castro. America and Europe disagree on the way to confront anti-Western countries like Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, and North Korea. Of course, Europe, like America, is dissatisfied with these countries' behavior. But what has enraged the Europeans and has placed them in front of the threat of an economic war with the world's largest economic power is America's hegemonism internationally. The European Union, 15 powerful economic members, cannot remain silent before America's extraterritorial laws that are contrary to international principles and extend to apply to other countries. This threatens the national sovereignty and the international prestige of every member of the European Union. The Europeans believe that the American statesmen can prevent only American companies from trading with Cuba, Iran, and Libya, and that they do not have any right to prevent European companies from doing so.

In view of this threat the foreign ministers of the European Union met in Brussels on Monday [15 July] and explicitly stated that if the Helms-Burton Act is implemented, they will take retaliatory steps that may include placing visa restrictions on American citizens, confiscating the property of American companies, or filing a suit against America in the World Trade Organization. Since the economic interests of the two economic blocs on both sides of the Atlantic are so closely linked, and there is closeness in American-European political-economic needs, naturally the imposition of such punishments by either of the two sides can threaten the unity of the Western world. We should not forget that the American-Japanese fight during World War II started with the imposition of such restrictions.

Bill Clinton is now facing a critical situation. He cannot threaten America's global interests to please some Republicans — especially when American capitalists too will derive no benefit from the Helms-Burton Act — and he must remember that the White House's failure vis-a-vis Cuba can harm the international prestige of the American leadership and also deprive him of the votes of the ethnic Cubans in America. Naturally, if the world resists the White House's arbitrary position on Cuba, it will act in the same way toward Iran and Libya too. Jewish pressure groups inside America hope ultimately to intensify the bill on economic sanctions on Iran — a policy that has been opposed everywhere except by the Zionist regime. Europe has won over the illogical

Americans this time, a time when Bill Clinton's defeat in the confrontation could mark the end of four years of rule by the Democrats in the White House. This is the horrible nightmare of the American President.

Iran: Daily Examines French, German Entry Into Mideast Politics

LD2907142796 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 24 Jul 96 p 2

[Unattributed editorial: "Franco-German Entrance Into ME Politics"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mediating the Lebanese-Israeli swap involving POWs and bodies of Muslim martyrs and Zionist soldiers was the first result of the new German foreign policy concerning the politics of the Middle East.

The hush-hush visit of German intelligence chief, Bernd Schmidbauer, to Tehran last month, which resulted in the cooperation of Iran, Syria, and Lebanon in Germany's humanitarian — and political — act of arranging the swap, together with Iran's assistance to France in resolving the 16-day Lebanon-Israel war, all point to the fact that certain regional countries are welcoming the German entrance into the Mideast political arena.

Middle East leaders are naturally reluctant to accept the United States as the sole superpower after the collapse of the former Soviet Union because of Washington's total and blind support for Zionists and its enmity toward Muslims.

So, despite the fact that they were forced to agree to Washington's dictates during the last five or six years, regional leaders can no longer accept the United States as an honest peace broker. Therefore, there is now a perfect opportunity for Europe to become active in this arena under the Bonn-Paris leadership.

France, due to its historical ties to the region and its return to Gaullist policies, enjoys the required confidence to take an active part in this political venture. But, Germany despite its economic might still lacks the necessary self-confidence to successfully pursue this endeavor and German leaders need to address this issue.

In any event, the Islamic Republic is prepared to use her influence in paving the way for the Bonn-Paris axis to enter the Middle East political scene, if the Europeans, specially the French and the Germans, consider the principle of 'justice' as the main objective in their efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis. Tehran will not only help Europe in this matter it will also ask its regional allies to cooperate with the Franco-German mediatory efforts.

Iran: Georgian Foreign Minister Interviewed on Relations

NC3007104296 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 23 Jul 96 pp 1, 12

[FBIS Translated Text] Without the participation of Iran in multilateral cooperation in the Caucasus, one cannot think of achieving peace in that region.

This was stated by Georgian Foreign Minister Irakli Menagharashvili in an interview with ABRAR yesterday before his departure. The Georgian foreign minister said: Iran's role as a bridge between the east and west adds to its significance in the Caucasus.

In another part of this interview he expressed hopes that contacts between Moscow and Tbilisi will increase. He added: It is important for us to have friendly relations with Russia.

In answer to ABRAR's first question on Iran's participation in the Caucasus peace process, which was brought up in his talks with the Iranian officials, he said:

Georgia's initiative on the peace process in the Caucasus calls for multilateral and bilateral cooperation in the region and outside the region. We believe that in order to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Caucasus, multilateral cooperation beneficial for all countries should be fostered and expanded.

Within this context, it is very clear that without Iran's participation in such cooperation, we cannot think of achieving peace in the Caucasus, especially because Iran is a big and influential country and neighbor.

The major role that Iran can play in the Caucasus is as a bridge between East and West, since the countries in the Caucasus cannot play this role.

[ABRAR] Despite the role that your country and several other regional countries envisage for Iran, some others — even outside this area — object to our active and positive role in establishing security and stability in the Caucasus. What is your view on this?

[Menagharashvili] It is possible for different ideas to exist in the world, just as it is possible for disagreements to exist. We think the most important issue is to be realistic. This is especially true for cooperation between Georgia and Iran. We are very well aware of the role that Iran can play in the Caucasus.

[ABRAR] Since the appointment of Colonel General Igor Rodionov as the Russian defense minister, we have seen some negative reactions from Georgian parties and personalities because he has been identified as being responsible for the April 1989 tragedy in Tbilisi. Meanwhile, the appointment of Aleksandr Lebed as secretary of Russia's Supreme Security Council even though he was the commander of the Red Army during the January 1990 incidents in Baku is taken to mean that Moscow's regional policy is becoming harsher. What is your opinion?

[Menagharashvili] The 1989 incidents are among the wounds that will always remain open for the Georgian people. But when it comes to political decisions in a country, we should be realistic.

We should also bear in mind that the generals are not the decision-makers, but the executors of decisions. We should not look at the past now. We should think about the steps that the new appointees will take in the future.

For us the most important thing is to have friendly relations with our neighbor Russia. We are well aware of the significance of preserving these relations and we hope that the same applies to Russia too.

[ABRAR] One of the topics in your talks with the Iranian officials was regional cooperation among Georgia, Iran, Greece, and Armenia. What will this cooperation include?

[Menagharashvili] One of the major principles in Georgia's foreign policy is to have good relations with all its neighbors. This plays a significant role in solving regional disputes and in establishing multilateral cooperation.

[ABRAR] Georgia wants to join the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] as well as Western economic-military organizations such as the European Union and NATO. How successful has Georgia been in this?

[Menagharashvili] There is one simple truth that is obvious. The Caspian Sea littoral countries, Central Asia, and the Black Sea littoral countries need closer relations among themselves. We are determined to extend the existing regional relations into extra-regional relations.

Georgia is one of the founders of the Black Sea littoral countries' organization. Some non-littoral countries participate in this organization as observers. We believe that it is logical for the members of this organization to cooperate with the ECO members.

In April 1996 Georgia signed a cooperation agreement with the European Union. All these organizations and unions have only come into existence recently. We want to consolidate and expand our relations with them. At the same time, we are striving to expand cooperation to include countries that are not members of these organizations. This will benefit all the members of these organizations and unions, including Georgia.

[ABRAR] Since Georgia is a member of NATO's peace participation program, will NATO forces be deployed in your country in the future?

[Menagharashvili] Georgia is a newly-independent country. Of course we do have experience in cooperation with both Eastern and Western countries. We are trying to use the experiences that these countries have accumulated and we believe we will benefit from it.

[ABRAR] So, is your answer to my question positive?

[Menagharashvili] What do you think?

[ABRAR] I think that it was!

[Menagharashvili] No!

[ABRAR] Mr. Menagharashvili, thank you for having devoted some of your time to us.

Iran: Radio—U.S. Might Persuade Egypt To Help With Peace Process

LD2807124896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT 28 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak began his first visit to America since the onset of the news events in the Middle East. For this purpose, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa went to America a few days ago to prepare the way for Mubarak's visit there and the elimination of differences between the two countries. Between the visits of these two senior Egyptian officials to America, in the past six days America and Egypt have concluded many cooperation agreements in economic and military fields that speak of the two sides' determination to eliminate current misunderstandings.

Part of these differences relate to the bilateral problems between Cairo and Tel Aviv and America's total support for the Zionist regime in these particular cases. Among these differences one can refer to Egypt's protest against the Zionist regime's mass destruction arsenal, in particular the environmental pollution ensuing from it. The Egyptian officials' displeasure is mainly concerned with America's and the Zionist regime's opposition to Egypt's gaining access to conventional arms and even purchasing missile parts from North Korea, despite that regime being totally equipped with nuclear arms. In fact the signing of the recent military agreement between

Cairo and Washington can be taken as U.S. officials' positive response to Egypt's demands in this issue. In this way, White House officials are trying to prevent Egypt turning to America's international competitors as well as make use of Egypt for getting the compromise process out of its current deadlock and promoting it in line with America's interests. On that basis, the greater part of the talks between Husni Mubarak and Bill Clinton and other U.S. officials is devoted to recent developments in the region, and any discussion about other bilateral issues, including the way of continuing U.S. economic and military aid for Egypt, will depend on the progress of talks on the region. U.S. officials use this as a carrot and stick instrument. It is considered likely that during this visit, U.S. officials, by raising their positive response to Egypt's request for increasing its defense capabilities, will call on Husni Mubarak to moderate his approach toward Tel Aviv and desist from stressing the need to implement recent decisions made by Arab leaders in their Cairo summit.

Since Egyptian officials realized the dangers of implementing the peace process sought by the Israeli regime in the Middle East a long time before the Likud party's accession to power in occupied Palestine and adopted a new approach after reviewing their earlier policies, any new review in Egypt's new regional policy seems unlikely. Nevertheless, there is a real likelihood that Egyptian officials, in return for new economic and military aid from America, will continue their political efforts to encourage those Arab states involved in the peace process to negotiate with Tel Aviv.

Iran: Official Hopes Iran-PRC Ties Would Curb U.S. Interference

LD2807173496 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 28 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 28, IRNA — Deputy president of Iran for executive affairs, Mohammad Hashemi told vice-chairman of the foreign policy committee of China's People's Congress Sunday [28 July] that the world countries today cannot tolerate to be dictated upon by the United States. He said Washington's sanctions against Iran are globally considered to diversely affect the free trade and international peace.

Hashemi said Washington's tenure as a global ring leader has long since come to its end making the Americans unable to dictate their wills on smaller nations.

The Iranian official also expressed hope that Iran and China would steadily broaden their mutual cooperation and their cooperation with other countries with a view to curbing U.S. intervention in their own affairs.

The visiting Chinese official said that U.S. sanctions against Iran would be against regional peace and China was opposed to US-led sanctions against Iran. The Chinese official also said that his government was intent on broadening relations with Iran, and that no foreign power could hamper the march to the two countries to closer relations. He expressed hope that Iran and China would broaden their trade and economic exchanges.

Iran: Irish Senate Speaker Interviewed on Iran-EU Ties

NC2907131796 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 18 Jul 96 pp 1-2

[FBIS Translated Text] The Irish Senate speaker has commented on his visit to Iran, on developments in the Middle East, and on the continuation of the European Union's talks with Iran.

In an interview with ABRAR's parliamentary correspondent, Liam Naughten commented on his talks with our country's high-ranking officials, saying: During these meetings both sides expressed their wish to expand trade and economic ties. He said that no political discussions were held with officials in these meetings and added: Actually, general issues were discussed between us and Iran's high-ranking officials,

Speaking about the future of the policy of exploratory talks between the European Union and Iran, he said: These talks have been going on between the European Union and Iran for some time now. We hope this policy will benefit the long-term interests of Iran and the European Union.

Naughten commented on recent remarks by Zionist Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and said of the Middle East peace process: We play a significant role in the European Union and we hope the Middle East problem will be solved peacefully and that the talks will bring Israel to its senses.

Ireland's ambassador in Tehran, who also attended the interview, said: I think it is very rare for all problems to be solved at once. Israel's problems with Palestine date back several years. This is not a problem that can be easily solved. The Middle East peace talks, which the European Union is continuing, represent an effort for a peaceful resolution of differences.

The European Union and Ireland in particular are trying to encourage all the conflicting sides to commit themselves to the agreements that have been reached.

He added: Despite America's criticism of trade between Iran and the European Union, we have no problems in relation with this.

Iran: Tehran Assails U.S. 'Interference' Over Aid to Bosnia

LD3007165496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 30 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. Administration has declared its opposition to Iran's $50-million aid to Bosnia. In this regard, spokesman of the U.S. State Department Nicholas Burns has claimed Bosnia is not in need of the $50-million aid, promised by Iran in the course of [Iranian Vice President] Dr. Habibi's visit to Sarajevo.

One of the objectives of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy is emphasis on the expansion of ties and cooperation with the Muslim states of the world. For the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined and firm in its belief that development of ties among the Islamic states can lead to the settlement of internal problems and the growth and development of their economies, should these Muslim states use one another's capabilities in various fields.

In the political dimension, too, the Islamic states can adopt a joint policy on the international scene and in their regional ties, and form a united front against international developments.

Therefore, cooperation between Iran and Bosnia-Herzegovina can be assessed within the framework of cooperation among the Islamic states.

The Iranian Government stayed with the Muslim nation and Government of Bosnia during three and half years of aggression by the Serbs against Bosnia. Iran has always supported the Bosnian Muslims through humanitarian aid.

On the political and diplomatic scenes, too, the Islamic Republic of Iran has done its best to bring an end to the war in Balkans. Iran rushed to the help of the Bosnian Muslims under the conditions when the big powers refrained from extending any help or taking any measures to bring an end to the Balkan crisis.

The U.S. concern over closer ties between Iran and Bosnia is in fact in [word indistinct] of the United States' intervening policies in the Balkans, for the Americans believe that the extension of ties between Iran and Bosnia will be in contradiction with its long-term policies in the Balkans. Therefore, she tries to prevent further cooperation between Iran and Bosnia under various pretexts.

The new world system stresses cooperation and expansion of ties between countries. Therefore, the U.S. interference in the mutual ties between the countries is an obvious violation of the UN Charter which leaves nations free to decide for their own fates.

Iran: TEHRAN TIMES on Israel-Hizballah Prisoner Swap

LD2907141996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 24 Jul 96 p 2

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Zionist regime and Hizballah have agreed to swap prisoners and the remains of dead soldiers in an unprecedented accord struck with the help of German mediation.

Although we should congratulate the Hizballah for its achievement, the international community should not forget that the Zionist regime has been keeping the Lebanese prisoners in violation of international rules and regulations.

Unfortunately, Israel has been violating all recognized international standards with full impunity because the main advocates of human rights have been lenient with the Zionist regime.

Israeli commandos kidnapped Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd and Mustafa Dirani from their homes in 1989 and 1994. The two have been kept in Israeli prisons since then. This is clear instance of state-sponsored terrorism.

Neither the U.S. nor the UN has ever condemned the Zionist regime for kidnapping. But the Clinton Administration has left no stone unturned to punish Libya for its alleged involvement in the explosion of an airplane. The White House has gone to the extent of imposing sanctions on Libya which has brought nothing short of fiasco for the U.S.

The UN is equally to blame for its double standards. The UN sanctions on Iraq and Libya show that the world body is not impartial in its approach towards the issues of human rights and terrorism.

Although we laud the efforts of Germany, specially those of Bernd Schmidbauer for the Israeli-Lebanese prisoners swap, such attempts are basically tantamount to putting the cart before the horse. In order to find a basic solution to the plague of Arab men and women (and Iranian diplomats) languishing in Israeli prisons, the UN should bring the Israeli culprits to book. Kidnappers are plain bandits and international bodies should not spare them. Israeli leaders are as criminal as Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic and should be tried and punished for their war crimes against civilians.

Iran: Paper Urges Solution to Kashmir Dispute

LD2907135796 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 23 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Preserve Picturesque Kashmir"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran enjoys good neighbourly relations with both Pakistan and India, and since those two nations gained their independence in 1947, Tehran has always been concerned over any unwanted rifts which occurred between the two. Kashmir, situated at the foot of the Himalayas, has long been a source of anxiety for the well-wishers of the two major countries of West Asia.

Once picturesque Kashmir was the main attraction for international tourists because of its natural beauty. The beautiful valley can also rightly boast of possessing a rich culture.

The entire Indian subcontinent remained under the clutches of British colonists for centuries and was mostly ruled by the British Samraj or aliens' rule which always followed a 'divide and rule policy'. The Kashmir problem is a direct result of that policy which has caused India and Pakistan to go to war twice.

After so many years of bloodshed, destruction and waste of constructive potentials, the Kashmir problem still exists with no solution in sight.

Iran, in the past, several times offered its good offices as an honest broker for mediation between New Delhi and Islamabad. But the offer remained in cold storage because of Indian reluctance.

A recent development has once more sent the ball into the Indian court. Pakistan National Assembly Speaker, Seyed Yusuf Raza Gilani, just before leaving Tehran for Islamabad on Sunday [28 July] expressed his country's willingness for accepting Iran's mediation in the Kashmiri dispute.

India and Pakistan have to develop their nations and improve the subcontinent's economy and industry, and common sense demands that their energies be spent on these endeavours rather than on fighting each other verbally or militarily. The Kashmir issue should be resolved soon over the negotiating table with the participation of both nations' friends, so that the leaders of India and Pakistan can carry on with the enormous development tasks ahead of them.

A piece of good news, Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and his Pakistani counterpart Benazir Bhutto agreed to resume their bilateral talks at foreign secretary level. Sincere friends of both countries have expressed relief over the statements issued by them recently.

What India and Pakistan want is a just solution acceptable to both countries, through bilateral negotiations or through mediation by a friendly third country.

An honest solution to a 50-year-old conflict will not only create stability and peace in West Asia, but it will also preserve picturesque Kashmir.

Iran: Syria's Problems Viewed in Latest Israeli Pullout Proposal

LD2707203296 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1655 GMT 27 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The reactions of Arab countries to the Zionist regime's proposal to withdraw conditionally from southern Lebanon indicates that they do not have much faith in the promises of the Zionist regime—especially when these promises are accompanied by certain preconditions.

Lebanon has announced that it does not recognize any preconditions, and has called for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon within the framework of the UN Security Council's Resolution 425. The secretary general of the Arab League described Binyamin Netanyahu's proposal as an endeavor to create a split between Lebanon and Syria, and the Egyptian foreign minister has expressed doubt about this proposal and has called on the Zionist regime to fulfill its previous accepted commitments, such as withdrawal from al-Khalij.

[Begin Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati recording] This is not the first time that the Zionist regime has sought to withdraw from Lebanon. It is totally in their interest to do so. But their problem — the problem they face here — is the problem that Syria will be facing, because, if Israel manages to separate southern Lebanon from the Golan Heights by being devious and scheming, Syria will, in practice, be left on its own in the Middle East arena. The Islamic resistance in southern Lebanon is currently a strong lever in forcing Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories — the Golan Heights or southern Lebanon. Whereas, what they — the Israelis and Americans — would like to say is that the resistance in southern Lebanon is there only to liberate southern Lebanon, and therefore, when the Israelis withdraw from there, there will no longer be any reason for the Islamic resistance to continue. So, in the middle of all this, Syria will lose out because the likelihood of Israeli troops withdrawing from the Golan Heights will be reduced, while pressure on Syria will increase. This will really mean that Syria and Lebanon will part policy on the Middle East and on their confrontation with Israel.

So, on each occasion in the past, when Israel has been playing this tune, Lebanon has announced, in one way or another, that Lebanon and Syria stand alongside each other and that the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon are also together. [end recording]

The Zionist regime has so far raised the issue of withdrawing from southern Lebanon many times, and under current circumstances, it seems that by raising this issue again, it is pursuing numerous objectives. Before anything else, it is endeavoring to portray itself as a defender of the compromising [peace] process, and in this way, to reduce the pressure that is being inflicted on that regime because of opposition to the extreme stances of the Likud Party. On the other hand, in this devious way Tel Aviv is trying to separate Lebanon from Syria and to weaken the position of Damascus. Moreover, with this plan, the Zionist regime can remove its negotiations with Lebanon from the framework of Resolution 425, which clearly supports Lebanon, and calls for the unconditional withdrawal of Zionist forces from southern Lebanon.

The response of the Arab countries shows that there are no grounds for implementing the Zionist regime's proposed plan.

Iran: Commentary—Improved Situation for New Envoy in Afghanistan

LD2807151896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT 28 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Norbert Holl, the new UN envoy for Afghan affairs, yesterday entered Jalalabad and transferred the UN office from Islamabad to that city, thus carrying out the first stage of his mission. He succeeded Mahmud Mestiri, the former UN envoy for Afghan affairs, three months ago. In his first speech, he adopted similar stances to Mestiri's, stressing the point that he has come to Afghanistan without any advance plans. This approach toward the long-standing Afghan crises is a diplomatic peculiarity of UN envoys, which is repeated in most critical areas in order to fall back on as a basis or evidence to explain the success or failure of their mission.

However, political experts, optimistic about the new situation that the new UN envoy will face in Afghanistan, believe that his agenda is somewhat different to that of Mestiri's. That is because a part of Mestiri's two year mission coincided with fierce fighting, he did not reach a clear picture about Afghan developments and the limits of power of the involved groups up to last fall. His efforts to gain such a picture about the inter-relations between various Afghan groups were at the heavy cost of spreading the war to western Afghanistan and further complicating the situation.

However, Holl, a veteran German diplomat who is versed in south Asian issues, enters Afghanistan under the conditions where this country has put behind it 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995] — which was full of uncertainties. It has now regained its political equilibrium to a certain extent, talks by the Rabbani-Hekmatyar coalition government with the leaders of the main groups, in particular the Coordination Council members and the Nangarhar Jihadi Council, have achieved tangible results and it seems that the Jalalabad-Kabul-Mazar-e Sharif triangle has the necessary readiness to reach a national understanding and set up a broad-based government. Such a favorable situation offers the new UN envoy an opportunity to strengthen the Afghan peace talks that have begun within Afghanistan itself and around the Kabul axis, by carrying out a well-considered study of power relations in Afghanistan and utilizing the UN's international resources.

Iran: Deputy Warns Azerbaijan of Pressure From U.S. Presence

LD3007123696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 22 Jul 96 p 5

[Unattributed report from the paper's legal and parliamentary affairs page: "Ghanizadeh, Deputy for Orumiyeh, Pre-agenda speech"; sub-headed: "Alireza Ghanizadeh, Deputy for Orumiyeh"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the Majles session the next speaker was Ghanizadeh from the electoral constituency of Orumiyeh who said: We are undergoing a sensitive time in the period of reconstruction. He added: As the eminent leader [Khamene'i] has said, "the value of the period of reconstruction is no less than that of the period of sacred defense, the Iran-Iraq war." We must therefore use the experiences we gained during the sacred defense.

Ghanizadeh listed the following as some of the reasons for success during the period of sacred defense: Total obedience to the absolute rule of the Velayat-e Faqih [supreme jurisconsult], unity between the forces of the revolution, a spirit of self-sacrifice, martyrdom, bravery, courage, publicizing the culture of battle and struggle in society, joint sympathy shown by the press, radio, and television with these aims, and valuing combatants.

Ghanizadeh stressed: Today we are facing a cultural and economic onslaught. We must recognize that the battle between justice and injustice has not come to an end, and we are under continuing attack from enemies. If we wish to emerge successful from this period as well, we must bear those same factors as the period of sacred defense in mind.

The deputy for Orumiyeh said: During the period of reconstruction we must value the combatants of this period, that is, those who are active in the fronts of culture, production, development, industry, and agriculture, and we must keep this spirit alive in society.

Ghanizadeh referred to the fact that in the Republic of Azerbaijan we are witnessing the granting of extensive facilities for the presence of elements from the Zionist regime and the United States in the Muslim country of Azerbaijan. He said: We are witnessing extensive pressures on the Muslims of that republic. We declare to the leaders of the regime ruling Baku that they should learn a lesson from the history of the secular regime in Turkey and they should see how, after 70 years of efforts by Turkey's secularists to combat religion, the Muslims are, in the end, having the last say in that republic. [passage omitted]

Iran: Tehran To Help Azerbaijan in Fight Against Drugs, Terrorism

LD3007091196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The first round of talks between the interior ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran took place in Tehran last night.

According to the Central News Unit, in this round of talks, Ramil Usubov, the minister of internal affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, said that he was delighted to be visiting Iran. He also referred to Iran's successes in its fight against drug smuggling, and the medal of distinction it has received for this from international forums. He added: In view of the rise in drug smuggling activities and addiction in the Azerbaijani Republic, Baku would like to benefit from Iran's experience in fighting terrorism and drugs, of cooperating with Interpol, and training law enforcement forces.

Usubov called on Iran to continue extending its humanitarian assistance to the Azerbaijan Republic.

Interior Minister ['Ali Mohammad] Besharati, for his part, referred to the two countries' efforts to strengthen security and tranquillity in their shared border regions and said: The security of merchants and businessmen who trade between the two countries should be guaranteed in such a way that would stop criminals from entering the territories of either country.

Besharati added: Iran could pass on the experience it has gained in its fight against drugs and terrorism and in its cooperation with Interpol, to the Azerbaijan Republic.

Iran: Official Examines Tajik Conflict, Peace in Caucasus

LD2807135296 Tehran IRNA in English 0703 GMT 28 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 28, IRNA — Lasting peace in Tajikistan requires public participation in government affairs and formation of a coalition, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Iranian Foreign Ministry's Director General for Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) 'Ali Majedi made the remarks in an interview with the English-language daily 'IRAN NEWS' printed on Sunday [28 July].

He stressed that a democratic government will appear through consideration of the views of various Tajik groups.

Commenting on agreements reached between the Tajik Government and the opposition groups, he noted, "unfortunately the clashes resumed an hour later."

Remarking that the recent talks have been more positive than those of the past, he speculated the possibility of political negotiations.

Tajik issues spring from regional matters and regionalism which is dominant in Tajikistan, he said, adding to prevent the escalation and prolongation of the crisis, the differences between the two sides should be ironed out and decisions made should be respected.

Turning to the conflict in the Caucasus, Majedi said Iran will respond positively to demands for its mediation in Azerbaijan-Armenia skirmishes over Nagorno-Karabakh as it opts for peace and stability in the region.

On the Caspian Sea, he stated that by the end of this year the meeting of the foreign ministers of the littoral states will be held for the first time to determine the issues relating to the fate of the sea.

On the plan recently devised by the Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze for participation in the Caucasus peace, Majedi said. "Iran and Russia have been invited to take part in this venture, with Iran giving a positive response to the invitation."

As to Iran's cooperation with republics in the Central Asia and the Caucasus, he noted that certain plans are underway. Cooperation in the field of energy will pave the way for cooperation in other areas. "We hope regional cooperation in the field of oil and gas would be promoted."

Iran: Paper Reports 50 Workers Exposed to Nuclear Radioactive Material

NC3107070496 Paris AFP in English
0649 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 31 (AFP)—At least 50 workers, including seven engineers of German company Siemens, have been exposed to nuclear radioactive material in northern Iran, a newspaper reported Wednesday [31 July].

Twenty-one of those contaminated have been transferred to hospital to receive "special treatment," the HAMSHAHRI daily said without giving details of the extent of the contamination.

"Carelessness in maintaining a sensitive piece of equipment for production of gamma rays caused the incident in a power plant" in the city of Rasht in Gilan province, the report added without specifying when the incident took place.

Iran: Official Tells AFP Contamination Incident 'Nothing Serious'

NC3107084496 Paris AFP in English
0831 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tehran, July 31 (AFP)—At least 50 workers, including seven engineers of the German company Siemens, have been exposed to nuclear radioactive material in a power plant in northern Iran, a newspaper reported Wednesday [31 July]. [passage omitted]

The Iranian authorities said the Rasht power plant was not a nuclear one, though it confirmed that an accident had happened there while seeking to play it down.

A power ministry official, who asked not to be named, told AFP the plant runs on gas. One person was contaminated in an accident, he said, without giving details.

"It is nothing serious," he said, adding that the ministry would soon release more information.

Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation told AFP that the plant was not under its jurisdiction. [passage omitted]

Iran: SALAM—Who Nominates Whom for Presidency?

96LA0382A Tehran SALAM in Persian 28 Jul 96
[page number illegible]

[FBIS Translated Text] News Service—Domestic: Political groups have begun their efforts to name a candidate for the next presidency of the republic.

According to reports received from political circles, extensive activities and talks have begun to name a candidate for president of the republic who is aligned with these groups.

Last week a number of the groups and organizations forming the coalition of groups following the Imam's line held lengthy discussions and meetings with Engineer Mir Hoseyn Musavi, and then asked for his agreement to be a candidate for president of the republic.

According to this report, the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution Organization, the Unity Reinforcement Office and the Association of University Teachers and Instructors were in agreement on this request.

Likewise, several members of the Association of Islamic Consultative Majles Parties repeated this proposal in a talk with Engineer Mir Hoseyn Musavi. Several prominent political figures also held talks on this subject with Engineer Musavi. On the other, hand, in an interview with one of the newspapers, the general secretary of the Islamic Coalition Association announced that this association is presenting Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Nateq-Nuri as the qualified candidate for the coming elections for president of the republic.

It is worth mentioning that so far the Militant Clergy Association [Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez] has made no decision in this regard.

After Engineer Musavi and Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri, there are other individuals who are being discussed in political circles as candidates for president of the republic, including Dr. Habibi, first vice-president of the republic, and Mr Velayati, minister of foreign affairs.

Along with the above activities, other efforts have been made, including public opinion polls concerning the next president of the republic. One of yesterday afternoon's newspapers reported on one of these polls, quoting the director of the IRNA Organization. According to the information received, the results of the aforementioned organization's poll indicate that Engineer Musavi leads the list of likely candidates, and that he has a wide lead over the next contender.

It is worth mentioning that under the Constitution Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani cannot be a candidate in the coming elections for president of the republic, which are to take place next year [21 March 1997 - 20 March 1998]. For this reason, in political circles he is seen as becoming a part of the Islamic Consultative Majles after his term as president of the republic. Asadollah Badamchian, one of the Coalition Association's original members, regards Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani as being appropriate to serve as speaker of the Majles. Mr Movahedi-Savoji, Islamic Consultative Majles deputy from Tehran, considers Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani as being the most worthy individual to serve as speaker of the Majles, but he has also raised the possibility of him becoming a member of the Guardian Council after the end of his term as president of the republic.

Iran: Outgoing ECO Secretary General Confers With Velayati

LD2807142996 Tehran IRNA in English
1200 GMT 28 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 28, IRNA — Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Shemshad Ahmad conferred with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati at the end of his tenure here on Sunday [28 July]. Shemshad Ahmad called as "positive" the outcome of his mission in Iran as the secretary general of the ECO and a former Pakistani ambassador to Tehran. He lauded Iran's active role and its support for strengthening and developing the ECO. Velayati on his part said the 10-year long presence of Shemshad Ahmad in Iran, his efforts to expand Tehran-Islamabad ties and his activities as secretary general of the ECO have been "fruitful." Velayati assessed as "eye-catching" the strengthening and expansion of the scope of activities of the ECO member states over the past three years both quantiatively and qualitatively. He underlined the importance and the role of regional cooperation in the world equation. He added that establishment of ties, exploring avenues for cooperation and expansion of cooperation between the ECO and other regional organizations could be effective in promoting world peace and stregthening global economy.

Iran: Commentary Views Improving Economic Prospects

LD2907100596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
0330 GMT 29 Jul 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an address to the Market Regulation Headquarters yesterday, the ministers of industry, mines and metals reported on the increase in the supply of various industrial and metal products, and the decrease in the price of most household goods and iron/copper products.

Another report by the Central Bank on the changes in the retail-price index and a five percent decline in the inflation index for the month of Khordad [ending 20 July] in comparison with the previous month, is another indication that the government has been successful in the gradual curbing of the market and prices.

In other words, the basic policy of countering inflation and high prices, through an increase in productivity and supply of goods, has once again proved its effectiveness.

In fact, most suitable grounds have been prepared for the country's economic flourishing through the unceasing construction of infrastructural and productive units, prompt allocation and provision of foreign currency, relative stability in the country's economic policies and regulations, and a significant growth of the industrial sector, which is now the economic driving engine for the country.

Indeed, a decline in the country's severe dependence on foreign currencies and its increasing capabilities have met the approval of international experts regarding Iran's economic progress and the strength of its economic structures.

But these developments must be supported and reinforced through the rapid completion of hundreds of projects, bigger investments, and the direction of the money supply toward productivity.

Every year a large section of Iran's youthful population is entering the labor market and the provision of employment for them must be at the top of the agenda for the government.

This cannot be achieved but through a reduction in consumption, larger savings, bigger investments, prevention of waste, and higher profit margins.

Iran: Export Promotion Bank Chief Views Performance

LD2907135296 Tehran IRNA in English
0846 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 29, IRNA — The capital of the Export Promotion Bank of Iran is to reach dlrs. 1,000 million by the end of the second 5-year development plan (1995-1999), said the bank's Managing Director Noruz Kahzadi Monday [29 July]. He added that the capital is to amount to dlrs. 200 million by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 1997).

Stating that the country's non-oil exports are mainly traditional products, he called for increase in industrial exports. Stressing that the bank has no outstanding debt or letter of credit, he said the remaining loan packages of the bank amounted to rls. 550,000 million last Iranian year (ended March 19). It is to total rls. 600,000 million by the end of the current year (March 20, 1997).

The bank acts as the representative of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and does not have any branches in other countries. However, it is the IDB agent in the Central Asian countries, he said. Kahzadi added that the bank allocated dlrs. 50 million of loan facilities in foreign currency to imports.

Active in export of technical and engineering services, the bank has paid about dlrs. 30 million of loan package in foreign exchange to Pars wagon company as financial backing for participating in tenders.

Iran: Deputy Urges Boost for Non-Oil Exports

LD2907143896 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 24 Jul 96 pp 1, 13

[Unattributed Report: "MP Stresses Enhancement of Non-Oil Exports"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — A parliamentarian yesterday accentuated the need to enhance non-oil exports based on Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i's order for non-reliance on oil exports.

Speaker to 'IRAN NEWS' Majles (Parliament) Deputy from Sanandaj (Kordestan province), Baha'oddin Adab, said right now Iran has many resources that can be exploited to boost non-oil exports, but as yet these resources have not been located and identified.

Majles and the government should attempt to identify and locate these potential resources throughout the country and approve and implement a plan for their exploitation, he pointed out.

Adab noted that Iran is a novice in exports in a world market that resembles an impenetrable stronghold. "Among reasons behind this shortcoming, I can refer to Iran's weakness in marketing strategy in foreign countries and unfamiliarity with global economy."

"To get into this impenetrable stronghold, we should have a complete and comprehensive plan that would widely and profoundly consider all aspects, and design the mechanisms to make this process easier," Adab stressed.

He said one of the needed mechanisms for exports is the formation of a fund for exports guarantee which would assist the exporters.

Adab remarked that all countries progressing in exports possess such a fund that support the exporters.

"To promote exports, in particular given our single-commodity economy based on oil revenues, we also need to establish such a fund," he stressed.

Adab said this fund is instrumental for non-oil exports as it determines and approves the credit for Iran's commercial exchanges with other nations.

In fact, the level of exports to other countries depends on the cost of insurance determined by these funds, he noted.

But the sources of income and financial provisions of this fund should be accounted for to enable it to carry out its undertakings, the MP added.

Adab said that governmental rules and regulations should not be enforced on this fund, as it should be able to work rapidly and flexibly to win the confidence of its parties.

The deputy expressed hope that non-oil exports would be enhanced with the development of this fund which is a major trade tool. He also demanded the abrogation of the current impeding rules.

Adab marked, "Our country has ample potential for exports. We should have a national estimate of our capabilities. For instance, the country's diverse climatic conditions allow us to produce various types of agricultural goods. Also the processing industries can guarantee the country's required value added."

On barriers in the way of exports, he noted, "As we have been importers for many years and had neglected non-oil exports, we now face problems caused by diverse laws that impede exports. We should swiftly identify and cancel these laws."

He stressed the need to approve laws that would encourage exports. "Alongside this, our manufactured goods should comply with ISO-9000 and ISO-9001 as a fixed and undeniable principle that insures success in our tasks," he said.

The MP urged that the commercial attaches of Iranian embassies be active and possess specialized knowledge to assist exporters.

He proposed setting up a joint commission comprised of the Council of Ministers, Majles deputies, the Majles Research Center, and the representatives of the private sector to devise a comprehensive plan for non-oil exports.

After approval by the Majles, they should forward this plan to the government for enforcement, enabling the exporters to regularly increase export volumes under proper conditions, he said.

"I would like to reiterate that Iran is a large and rich country. Now that the Eminent Leadership has issued a decree and the Majles and government want to principally undertake comprehensive plans to promote non-oil exports, Iran will have much to say in the international market, once the needed infrastructures are provided and the impeding directives are cancelled," he emphasized.

"For instance, during the First 5-Year Development Plan, the country's technical and engineering capacity was boosted. Right now, this capacity transcends the requirements of the domestic market. Surely, a considerable part of this capacity should be geared towards exports," he remarked. Certain admirable measures have currently been taken for technical and engineering exports, the MP said, adding, "But this is not sufficient. As noted, we should adopt a more comprehensive and profound view toward the matter and try to strengthen the positive points and rectify anything negative."

Iran: Ministers Comment on Price Drop, Production Increase

LD2907135596 Tehran IRNA in English 0846 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 29 Jul, IRNA — Price of home appliances reduced in the market during the recent weeks due to increase in domestic production, said Minister of Industries Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh. Speaking at the meeting of the headquarters to support market regulation programs Sunday [28 July] night, he said industrial production will further increase in the coming months. Ne'matzadeh said during the first four months of the current Iranian year (started March 20), production of washing machines rose by 39 percent, vacuum cleaners 52 percent, gas-operating air conditioners by 29 percent, color TV sets by nine percent, refrigerators and freezers by eight percent and meat grinders by 150 percent. Meanwhile, Hoseyn Mahluji, Minister of Mines and Metals, speaking in the same session referred to the fall in price of various kinds of iron products and said 490,000 tons of iron products were produced in the country during the Iranian month of Tir (June 21-July 21). More than 100,000 tons of various kinds of surplus iron sheets have been produced and stored at the Mobarakeh Steel Complex, he added. Also in the session, a report was given on Agriculture Ministry's activities which said $104.7 million was allocated to provide various facilities needed for the sector during the first four months of the current Iranian year. During the same period the ministry provided more than 500,000 tons of home produced chemical fertilizers to the farmers; up by 20 percent compared to the same period last year. Head of Iran's Customs Office 'Abdolhoseyn Vahaji told the session that the amount of cargo transitted through Iran doubled during the first quarter of the current Iranian year compared to the same period last year.

Iran: President Stresses Importance of Education Sector

LD2707193496 Tehran IRNA in English 1420 GMT 27 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 27, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Saturday [27 July] said that it was necessary that more attention be paid to education sector as the foundation of the country's development.

Opening a congress of heads of the education departments, the president said that any development in the education sector meant the transformation of the entire society.

"The qualitative and quantitative growth of the education sector shows that the sector as the foundation of society is marching towards development and progress," the president said.

Thanks to the efforts of the Education Ministry staff, education has been provided for all children at school age, the president said, adding that such an important step has brought honor for the country from educational point of view.

"It is an honor for us that we have provided education for all children at school age by building 50 classrooms per day at the deprived areas of the country," the president said.

Referring to the consecutive success gained by Iranian students at various international scientific Olympiads, Rafsanjani said "the repeated success of Iranian students at Olympiads in which developed countries were represented indicates the improvement in the quality of educational service in Iran."

Meanwhile, the president awarded medal of merit to two efficient managers of the Education Ministry.

Before the president's speech, Education Minister Mohammad 'Ali Najafi said that over 18 million students were studying in schools and high schools in Iran last year, 46.3 percent of whom were female.

He said the number of illiterate people in Iran dropped from 15 million in 1989 to nine million last year.

Iran: IRAN NEWS on Death Sentences for Spying, Corruption

LD2907142496 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 24 Jul 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Revolutionary Court Sentences Spies to Death"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — Three businessmen were yesterday sentenced to death by Iran's Revolutionary Court for spying for Israel and the United States, as well as for fraud, according to Tehran radio.

Hedayatollah Zendehdel, Abolghasem Majd-Abkahi and 'Ali Reza Yazdanshenas were condemned for gathering classified military information during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war and passing it to foreign countries, notably the US.

They were also convicted of setting up "network of corruption and fictitious firms to cheat people and state banks out of their money and looting public funds," the radio said.

The three, who were arrested in 1988, were also accused of smuggling people out of the country by forging government documents, and working to restore the former Shah's family.

They were each sentenced to 170 lashes of the whip, which they will receive before being executed. The three were declared "corrupts on earth," an Islamic penal description which implies the death penalty.

Along with three other defendants, they were accused of being the ringleaders of a network. The trial which opened in January was the first public spy trial held in Iran since the Islamic Revolution.

The other defendants - Ali Sadafian, a former officer in the imperial guard, Abdolghafur Sartipi, a businessman, and Fereydoun Abuzia, a television actor - were given prison terms of between seven to 23 years and sentenced to between 110 to 200 lashes.

Meanwhile, the Revolutionary Court also passed the death sentence on a man who fired shots at President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in February 1994, Keyhan daily reported yesterday.

Kurosh Nikakhtar, 28, fired several shots as the president addressed an anniversary gathering at the mausoleum of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni (R.A.). The gunman was arrested immediately after the incident.

Nikakhtar's accomplice, Mohammad Musavi-Nia, was also condemned to death by hanging, but the sentence was overruled by the Supreme Court and the case has been forwarded to another tribunal, the paper said, citing Judge Mohammad-Reza Rahbarput.

A third suspect, Mohen Salsali was given three years in prison. Some 20 people were arrested in connection with the incident, which most Iranian leaders described as a plot to assassinate Rafsanjani.

Iran: Daily Reports on UN Environment Conference Held in Geneva

LD2907143296 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 24 Jul 96 p 2

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A declaration adopted at the United Nations Conference on climate change in Geneva last Friday [26 July] called for binding curbs on greenhouse gas emissions to reduce global warming.

The proposal, signed at ministerial level, represented progress from the political stalemate, the climate policy has recently witnessed, but much to the disappointment of environmentalists, it left a number of questions unanswered.

Despite strong evidence of many adverse climate effects already taking place, the international community has failed to show that it is willing to take urgent action against ensuing loss of life and substantial economic damage.

Delegations to the UN climate conference issued a declaration committing signatories of the Rio Climate Convention to negotiate a reduction in greenhouse gases.

The declaration urged significant overall reductions within specified time frames, such as 2005, 2010, 2020, but did not provide specifics on the percentage of emission limitation to be adopted.

The Geneva declaration will serve as a basis for negotiations in drawing up a legally-binding protocol on emission reduction to be adopted at the next climate convention in Kyoto, Japan next year.

The changes would have significant impact on ecological and social-economic systems including food and water supply and on human health.

The panel's report said humanity was responsible for today's global warming, which it described as probably the most serious that had occurred in the last 10,000 years.

According to scientists, if emissions are not cut deeper after the turn of the century, CO_2 concentration will double by 2050.

They warned that without action the average surface temperature would then warm by up to 4.5 degree Celsius (8 degree F) and sea levels would rise, flooding coastal cities and island nations in our children's lifetime. Eco-systems would be destroyed and agriculture disrupted. Deserts would expand and storms would become more frequent and violent.

Pacific states and African countries notably have voiced sharp concern over the effects of desertification in their countries, warning that they alone cannot thwart the effects of pollution from the world's bigger, industrialized nations.

The international community should work to find a pragmatic solution and see that industrialized nations, especially the United States, the biggest polluting nation in the world accounting for a quarter of the world output of carbon dioxide, take serious actions to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Environmental protection an extremely important and strategic issue, indeed has a bearing on any country's long-term development.

Iran: Drug Situation in Central Asia, ECO Countries Discussed

NC2807172096 Mashhad EQTESAD-E KHORASAN ECONOMIC WEEKLY in Persian 20 Jul 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] Two areas in the world produce the largest quantities of drugs. These are the "golden triangle" comprising northern Thailand, northeastern Myanmar (Burma), and northwestern and western Laos; and the "golden crescent" comprising Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, and the provinces of Helmand, Qandahar, and Nangarhar in Afghanistan. In 1995 opium production in the golden triangle was reported to be about 2,800 to 3,000 tonnes and in the golden crescent it was 3,600 to 4,000 tonnes. According to UN reports, this is about 94 percent of the total production in the world.

In the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] area, in addition to Afghanistan and Pakistan, the opium poppy is cultivated in Turkey and the Central Asian republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). Some opium is also produced in these countries. But there are no precise figures on the exact quantity of opium that is produced.

Turkey has 900 hectares of land under poppy cultivation officially and with the permission of international organizations. Some reports indicate that in 1995 about 4,000 hectares of land in Turkey was under poppy cultivation. In its reports to the United Nations, the Turkish Government has said that 13.3 tonnes of morphine or 133 tonnes of opium have been produced. Official figures put the area under poppy cultivation in the Central Asian republics at 500 hectares. But reports indicate that in Kazakhstan alone 700 hectares of land is under poppy cultivation. Definitely — in view of the high profits this industry ensures — poppy cultivation in these republics is being expanded. At any rate, on the basis of these same figures, the quantity of opium manufactured in these republics is at least over 50 tonnes per year.

Naturally, part of the drugs are used domestically. According to the UN Secretariat's calculations, only 10 to 15 percent of the drugs manufactured in Pakistan are exported. And because of the unrestrained spread of addiction, the International Committee on Drug Control reports that there are 3 million addicts in that country, using about 80 tonnes of heroin and 200 tonnes of opium. However, some sources believe that for political and economic reasons, these figures have been intentionally over-magnified.

The true number of addicts and the amount of drugs used inside Afghanistan are not clear because of the prevailing conditions in that country. Raw opium is used in rural areas, while heroin (in smaller quantities) and hashish on a vaster scale are used in the urban areas. Afghanistan's official and state sources believe that a more logical picture is that out of the total quantity of drugs manufactured in that country, only 1 percent — or about 300 tonnes of opium — is used inside the country. The area under poppy cultivation in Afghanistan has been reported by the UN drug control committee to be 86,000 hectares. However, the Afghan Government disagrees with this figure. The number of addicts in Afghanistan is not clear. But most Afghans use "snuff," which is not categorized as a drug.

The number of addicts in Turkey is estimated to be about 100,000, of whom 44,000 are heroin addicts. Meanwhile, the number of people using chemical substances is on the rise. This has long been a cause of concern for the Turkish Government, which has recently been showing more sensitivity toward the drug problem, and — with the cooperation of the Americans — has intensified its fight against drug trafficking. Drug finds in Turkey in 1995 netted about 240 kg of heroin, 16 tonnes of hashish, 130 kg of morphine and cocaine, and 112 kg of opium.

Before the victory of the Islamic Revolution, some 33,000 hectares of land was under poppy cultivation in Iran. After the revolution, poppy cultivation was halted. The number of addicts in Iran in 1981 was reported to be about 1 million. This number has been declining, and on the basis of estimates by the drug-enforcement staff, there are about 350,000 opium addicts and about 150,000 heroin addicts. The steps taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran to fight drugs since 1365 [1986] became more decisive with the handing over of this mission to the Islamic Revolution Committee. The fight against insurgents and armed smugglers reached its peak in late 1368 [1989] and early 1369 [1990]. In following years, the digging of 150 km of canals — 4 meters deep and 5 meters wide — on the Sistan va Baluchestan borders; the construction of 504 km of trenches along the Khorasan and Sistan va Baluchestan borders; the construction of 1,367 km of asphalt roads and railways along the eastern borders of the country; the closure of 20 border passes with concrete and earth dams; the mining of a number of fields; the arrest of dozens of drug lords, and so on are all part of efforts that have definitely decreased drug smuggling and trafficking via Iranian territory. During the past year, the number of drug finds has been on the increase, rising from 95 tonnes in 1372 [1993] to 163 tonnes in 1373. It is estimated that the same amount was found in 1374. Experts believe that the finds comprise 10 percent of the total quantity of drugs that enter the country. On this basis, we should accept the fact that several times more than the finds on the world level pass through Islamic Republic territory to Europe and America. The total quantity of finds in Europe and America in 1373 was said to be 5,627 kg, while Iran's finds were 30 times more than that. This shows that had it not been for the decisive fight by the Islamic Republic of Iran against the drug smugglers, the drugs confiscated in Iran would have found their way to Western markets.

A conservative estimate puts the profits made by the drug trade worldwide at $300-$500 billion. This in itself explains the ineffectiveness of the fight by countries and international organizations to uproot smuggling and drug abuse. The share of the drug-manufacturing countries in this profit is at least 1 percent — that is between $30-$50 billion — a large part of which goes to local and regional middlemen and only a small amount goes to the farmers. This means farmers in Afghanistan, which is the largest and most major opium manufacturer, receive a total of about $70-$120 million.

Iran: SALAM—U.S. Interests Keep Saddam From War Crimes Court

LD3007171696 Tehran SALAM in Persian 23 Jul 96 p 3

[Unattributed report from "Hello Salam" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Reader] Why is Saddam [Husayn] not being tried in an international court as a war criminal? Has Saddam committed fewer crimes than [Radovan] Karadzic?

SALAM — Foreign Service: There is no doubt that Saddam deserves to be tried for issuing an order to start the war between Iran and Iraq, for attacking our country's residential areas, and for violating dozens of other international and humanitarian laws, such as the mass killing of the innocent people of Halabjah and the use of chemical weapons. Saddam's actions will never be forgotten, even if relations between Iran and Iraq improve for some reason.

However, in most cases, the trial of war criminals takes place when the international situation allows it. The powerful countries such as America, which today considers itself as a strong supporter of punishing Karadzic, have witnessed both Saddam's crimes and watched the mass killing undertaken by Karadzic and his associates. The reason why Karadzic must be tried today and Saddam should remain in power, despite the advancement by the American forces toward Baghdad during the oil war, is an equation in which undoubtedly the interests of America are heavier then the defense of human rights.

Iran: Daily Views Iran's Quest for Technological Independence

LD2907144496 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 23 Jul 96 p 2

[Unattributed editorial: "Development Should Not Be at the Expense of Low Income Strata"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Returning from Hamadan Province, where President Rafsanjani inaugurated several giant construction projects, he announced that the government is determined to follow the trend of construction and development until the country is completely independent from others in different fields of technology and production.

Indeed, the country has already taken remarkable steps towards achieving this objective. Almost every day the mass media report the inauguration of power plants, industrial complexes and manufacturing centres, new roads and highways and modern telecommunications stations at different parts of the country. Today, even the remotest villages are supplied with electricity, piped water, telephone lines, schools, and health centres.

Undoubtedly, the achievements of the country in the relatively short period following the victory of the Islamic revolution far outweigh those of the pre-revolution era. Nevertheless, in parallel with implementation of construction projects and development of the country in various scientific and technological fields, unfortunately the gap between the haves and have-nots is getting wider.

In other words, social justice has been overshadowed by the cause of development. The reason is that the growing trend of development in most cases has entailed raising the prices of commodities and cost of services by the government, while the earnings of government employees have mostly remained fixed.

Furthermore, in order to invite the private sector to take part in the construction movement and secure funds for its development plans, the government has given free rein to the private businesses and service sectors. In particular, the due tax is not so strictly collected from the private sector as it is excised from the salary- and wage-earners. And that is injustice to the majority of the Iranian people, who are either employed by government departments or working at factories and manufacturing centres.

Another policy adopted by the government has been the scheme that the ministries and government offices should become self-sufficient, not depending on the treasury for their needed budgets. Thus, the government departments have been entitled to earn their necessary funds by raising the cost of their services or levying charges on certain services, which were previously offered gratis. In fact, the policy has not been in the interest of low-income classes and underprivileged strata.

The economic pressure on the people must be reduced, and that is the duty of the government executive to take measures to then end. In short, the development of the country in different fields, utilization of its natural resources and realization of its potentials should be achieved along with exercising social justice and shifting the payment of government expenses from the low income strata to the well-off classes.

Iran: Mazandaran Deputies Call For Halt to Rice Imports

LD3007104396 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 23 Jul 96 p 2

[Unattributed article: "Deputies of Mazandaran Province Call For a Halt in the Distribution of Imported Rice"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political desk — A group of Majles deputies from Mazandaran Province have sent a letter to the president calling for a halt to the distribution of imported rice during the harvest season and for the export of the excellent quality rice from this province.

According to our parliamentary correspondent, the letter states, in part: Fluctuating and unstable policies since last year on rice imports and exports, and the sudden rise in the price of this product has meant that production costs have been based on the anticipated price.

Elsewhere in the letter, it has been stated: The import of hundreds of thousands of tonnes of foreign rice into the domestic market, on the one hand, and the restriction on exporting rice abroad, on the other, has caused a decline in domestic production and a drop in prices.

In their letter to the president, the deputies from Mazandaran have called for a ban on the distribution of imported rice from the start of the harvest season until the end of Aban [month ending 20 November] as in previous years. The signatories have, in conclusion, called on the president to lift restrictions on the export of various types of top quality domestic rice, in exchange for foreign imports, in order to support the hard working strata of farmers.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Party Candidate Elected Prime Minister in Kashmir

BK3007115796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Barrister Sultan Mahmud Chaudhary of PP [People's Party], Azad Kashmir, has been elected prime minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir [AJK]. He was the lone candidate of his party, who bagged 35 votes in the legislative assembly. Earlier, the Legislative Assembly elected unopposed Mr. Mumtaz Hussain Rathore of PP, Azad Kashmir, speaker and Mr. Israr Ahmad Abbasi of the same party the deputy speaker. Both the speaker and the deputy speaker were elected unopposed. The outgoing speaker, Mr. Abdul Rashid Abbasi, administered the oath to Mr. Rathore, while the newly elected speaker administered the oath to the deputy speaker.

Later, addressing the house, Mr. Mumtaz Hussain Rathore assured the members that he would perform his responsibilities in accordance with the Constitution, irrespective of the political affiliation. He would provide equal opportunities to treasury and opposition benches to play their legislative role. The AJK PP president, Barrister Sultan Mahmud Chaudhary also spoke on the occasion. Earlier, the house approved a motion for the election of the speaker and the deputy speaker following oath of the newly elected members. One opposition member, Mr. Abdul Rashid Dorabi, of Jamaat-i-Islami, Azad Kashmir, took oath. The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference did not participate in today's proceedings.

Pakistan: Opposition Members Decline To Take Oath in Kashmir Assembly

BK3007085996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The newly elected members of the Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly took oath of their office in Muzaffarabad today. The speaker of the outgoing assembly, Mr. Abdul Rashid Abbasi, administered the oath. The secretary general of PPP [Pakistan People's Party], Azad Kashmir, and member of the assembly, Mr. Latif Akbar, presented a motion in the house to suspend the rules of procedure for the election of the speaker, deputy speaker, and the prime minister. The rules provided the election should be held after two days of the submission of the nomination papers. The house approved the motion. The election schedule for the office of the speaker, deputy speaker was announced, which are being held today.

Meanwhile, members belonging to the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference did not take oath and stayed away. One opposition member, Mr. Abdul Rashid Dorabi, of Jamaat-i-Islami, Azad Kashmir, took oath.

Pakistan: Bhutto Claims Government's Kashmir Policy 'Effective'

BK2907145796 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 29 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The newly elected legislative assembly of Azad Jammu and Kashmir meets in Muzaffarabad tomorrow. During the session, the members will be administered oath and elect the speaker and deputy speaker of the house.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has termed the electoral success in Azad Jammu and Kashmir assembly a result of her government's Kashmir policy. Addressing 38 members of the legislative assembly from Pakistan People's Party and allied parties in Islamabad today, she said her government adopted an effective policy to project the cause of the Kashmiri people at all forums, which was also appreciated by the people of Pakistan and Kashmiris. She expressed the hope that the struggle of the Kashmiri people would soon succeed. She said her government believed in the supremacy of the constitution and the recent change in Azad Jammu and Kashmir was the result of this policy. The prime minister said the people of Azad Kashmir had rejected the policies of [former Azad Kashmir Prime Minister] Sardar Abdul Qayyum and his government, which was involved in corruption and malpractice. The prime minister expressed the hope that the People's Party government in Azad Kashmir would come up to the expectations of the masses through its better performance.

Pakistan: Government To Close Offices of Kashmiri Organizations

BK2907071796 Rawalpindi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 28 Jul 96 pp 3, 10

[Report by Saleem Parwana]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Pakistani Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry, after consultations, have decided to close down the offices of the Kashmiri Mujahideen organizations in Azad Kashmir. According to reliable sources, the necessary instructions and policy guidelines have been conveyed to the government of Azad Kashmir for this purpose. At present, 24 Kashmiri organizations have their offices in Azad Kashmir. In the first phase the Pakistani Government will shut down the offices of seven Kashmiri freedom organizations. These organizations are the Karavan-i-Haider, the Muslim Guerrilla Force, the Hizb-e-Jehad, the Karavan-i-Mujahideen, the Islamic Student League, the Pasdaran-e-Islami, and the Islamic Front.

It is said that the offices of mujahideen organizations are being gradually closed down in view of the various solutions to the Kashmir dispute that are under consideration these days. The closing down the offices of Mujahideen organizations is considered to be the final step. Earlier, many organizations were merged together. About 65 Kashmiri organizations had offices in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir; this figure later came down to 23. Some time ago a number of refugee families went back to Indian-occupied Kashmir from the Kotli area. Now, because of the changed situation, its own political exigencies, and international pressures, the Pakistani Government has decided to close down the offices and withdraw the permission for the Kashmiri liberation organizations to establish their offices in Azad Kashmir. The government is formulating a policy for the implementation of this decision.

Meanwhile, refugees from Indian-occupied Kashmir who are living in camps have not been provided any subsistence allowance in the past three months. The Pakistani Government provides the subsistence allowance to the Kashmiri refugees and this has been made a part of the national budget. A responsible person for Azad Kashmir said on Saturday [27 July] that the government has approved a grant of 5.5 million rupees for the refugees and the payment of the allowance will resume soon. The responsible person said that the government of Azad Kashmir did not have money to pay the salaries of its employees let alone provide a subsistence allowance to the refugees.

Pakistan: U.S. Bill Reportedly To Affect Oil Deal With Iran

BK2907141596 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 29 Jul 96 p 1

[Report by Mariana Baabar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Though the Brown Amendment provided some relief to Pakistan in the face of stiff sanctions imposed by the Presser Amendment, Islamabad's energy concerns are going to be directly affected by fresh US legislation passed this week by Congress.

President Bill Clinton is expected to sign a bill that punishes foreign firms investing in the petroleum and gas industries in Iran and Libya. If it becomes law then according to a report Washington can impose any two of a menu of six sanctions on violators including import and export bans, denial of US bank loans and export-import bank credits and exclusion from US government contracts. This means the ongoing gas pipeline project from Iran into Pakistan will have to take a back seat once again when this legislation will become the law.

"We oppose sanctions. We feel there should be negotiations between Iran and the United States to sort out matters," a Foreign Office spokesman said while talking to THE NEWS.

The spokesman said several modalities had been discussed between Tehran and Islamabad on how to set up this gas pipeline project. It included Iran constructing the pipeline till our borders and then Pakistan finishing the rest, or it could be a joint venture between the two countries or else a company could act as the moderator. "We will adjust to the situation in the prevailing circumstances", the spokesman added.

He said, however, the European Union has not supported the US move to impose sanctions on Iran. "The US law has still not been signed so it is a little premature but no doubt it is in the offing", the spokesman said.

Earlier, the Iranian Ambassador, Mohammad Mehdi Akhondzadeh, said new arrangements had been made to take the gas pipeline up to Pakistan only and there was no precondition that it should also go to India.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Troops Consolidate in Areas Freed From LTTE Occupation

BK3007111796 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 30 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Troops continue to consolidate in the newly captured areas. As reported earlier, clearing Paranthan area is time consuming as the terrorists were occupying this area since 1990. Having chased away the civilians from the area, the terrorists had set up explosive devices and laid antipersonnel mines in order to hinder movement of security forces.

Operational headquarters in a news release this afternoon said that the terrorists continued their mortar attacks into the newly captured areas. Troops in anticipation are taking all precautions against mortar attacks and hence have not suffered any casualties. However, artillery and air [force] continued to engage terrorist mortar positions. It has now been revealed that the terrorist cadres holding on to the bunkers in Paranthan areas have reported to their leaders over the radio that they cannot hold on due to heavy artillery firing and air attacks. Having said this, they have abandoned their positions and fled further southward. So far, 54 names of cadres killed have been released over the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] transmissions. Operation Sathjaya continues.

Sri Lanka: SAARC Holds Meeting on Terrorism, Narcotics

BK3007034396 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 30 Jul 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The close links between terrorist groups, drug trafficking and the illicit arms trade have vested these groups with an unprecedented capacity to challenge even the most powerful states. No state can act in isolation to meet this challenge, said Defence Deputy Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte on Monday [29 July].

Delivering the keynote address at the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] conference on co-operation in Police matters at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall, Colombo, Ratwatte added: "The implementation in good faith of obligations under existing international and regional instruments providing for co-operation among states at the practical level is an absolute pre requisite in effectively countering this threat."

The foreign delegates were escorted to the venue of the ceremony in a procession headed by Kandyan dancers and beaters of 'magul bera'. Following a performance by the Police band, Ratwatte, Defence secretary Chandrananda de Silva and the foreign and local delegates lit the traditional oil lamp to inaugurate the sessions.

Ratwatte said: "It is my pleasant task this morning to make this address at the first conference of heads of police in the SAARC region being convened in Colombo. I am happy that despite the heavy responsibilities of office, you have been able to gather here to participate, in what I believe, is the commencement of a new chapter in SAARC co-operation.

"When the idea of South Asian Regional co-operation was first discussed in the 1980s, a conscious decision was taken to concentrate on what were considered "non-contentious" areas where regional co-operation was though to be feasible, given the political environment which prevailed in the region. Issues though to be of a politically sensitive nature were carefully avoided.

Nevertheless, the formal launching of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) in 1985 marked the beginning of a historic process in regional co-operation in South Asia. The significance of the birth of SAARC for our region was given eloquent expression at the first SAARC summit held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, by His Majesty Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal, who stated: The choice for us in the region is clear. After a long winter of mistrust, coldness and suspicion, this region of South Asia certainly looks forward to a new spring giving birth as it were to a new era of enlightened self-interest, based on a common desire to replace conflict with co-operation, to substitute discord with harmony and, finally, move from the attitude of self-centredness to a widening horizon of contacts in the region, in a spirit of reciprocity give and take, live and let live.

"Co-operation and widening of contacts at all levels, political, official and at the people-to-people level is indeed the underlying philosophy of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation.

"Despite the initial reluctance to venture into areas which were considered to be contentious and of a divisive nature, SAARC could not ignore serious threats which confronted the region as a whole and threatened to undermine the very security and stability of member states. At the first summit itself, therefore, the SAARC heads of state mandated a study of the problem of terrorism as it affects the security and stability of member states. This culminated in the adoption of the SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism.

"This was followed thereafter with the adoption of the SAARC convention on Narcotic Drugs. Sri Lanka attached the highest importance to these initiatives and played an active role to ensure their success. The SAARC Conventions on Suppression of Terrorism and Narcotic Trafficking constitute a collective regional response to the threat of "narco-terrorism". They centred upon providing a legal regime for extradition or prosecution of offenders and thereby precluding a safe-haven in the region for such offenders; denying the freedom of terrorists to prepare and mount terrorist acts against other states from one's own territory and the adoption of practical co-operative measures among law enforcement agencies in the region, in particular in the exchange of information, with a view to preventing acts of terrorism.

"I am happy to note that in your work program over the next couple of days the contemporary situation in the region with regard to the twin problems of drugs and terrorism, in particular the close nexus between them and the need for countervailing strategies to combat the problem, figure prominently."

Ratwatte quoting President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga's address last year at the special session to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly, said the President called upon the international community to ensure at the international level the scrupulous adherence to obligations arising from international conventions and declarations on the subject of terrorism. She stressed that efforts to combat terrorism at the national level and achieving national political reconciliation and stability cannot succeed as long as terrorist groups are permitted to maintain networks on foreign soil forming part of an elaborate international machinery for illicit fund raising to sustain their terrorist activities at home. President Clinton of the United States in his address to the 50th anniversary session also expressed similar views and called for a global agreement to counter terrorism and spoke of the need to close down what was referred to as "Gray Arms Markets" providing for a fee flow of arms to terrorists groups, the minister said.

In discussing countervailing strategies to meet the unprecedented threat posed to all states by the combined force of organised international crime such as terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling, it is important to take note of new forms and manifestations which are being resorted to by criminal groups, he said.

Forced displacement of people, both internally and externally and in particular the human trafficking of so-called "asylum seekers" abroad is one such manifestation. Human trafficking has become a rich source of funds to terrorist groups creating a vicious and self-supporting cycle of extortion, narcotics and arms smuggling and terrorism. These activities have also encompassed large scale falsification of passports and other documents such as visas and identity documents, Ratwatte said.

Recent technical advances, in particular the Internet information network, is also being used effectively and openly by terrorist groups, particularly for the extortion of money from asylum seekers in Western countries. Appeals are made ostensibly for humanitarian purposes, but clearly with the objective of raising much needed funds to sustain the activities of these terrorist groups, he said.

The sophisticated and complex nature of these operations require effective legal measures, in particular to criminalize "money laundering" in respect of proceeds of all serious crimes and to provide for confiscation of proceeds of crimes. Inter-state co-operation at the operational levels in the investigation and prosecution of money laundering would be an important component in devising countervailing strategies to deal with the problem of illicit funds which are diverted to the coffers of terrorists, the minister said.

He said: "The increasing resort to targeting of civilians by attacking public buildings and facilities is another aspect which demands urgent attention. In politically motivated acts of terrorism, as in Sri Lanka, attacks on civilian targets become the modus operandi of terrorist groups to exert maximum political pressure on the Government. When the lives of innocent civilians are placed in jeopardy, oppressive conditions are created and, through the creation of such conditions, terrorists seek to gain major political concessions. The recent Ottawa Ministerial Declaration on Countering Terrorism adopted by the industrialized nations, addresses this issue by stating that:

"Terrorists take advantage of the openness and the vulnerability of public facilities, particularly in free societies. As anti-terrorist measures have become more successful, terrorists are looking to new target of opportunity in their attacks. In order to reduce the risks to our citizens we pledge to co-operate further and to share the information and experiences concerning the protection and securing of possible targets such as transport systems, information systems, public utilities and public buildings, including diplomatic premises".

"This statement underlines the challenge confronting all nations, whether powerful industrialized developed countries or small developing countries. It is only through the sharing of information and experiences on these forms and manifestation of terrorism that we could collectively and meaningfully face up to these challenges, he added.

"The SAARC Conventions on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking provides the legal basis for such co-operation through exchange of information, experiences and through the provision of training opportunities. The SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) and the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD) which are in the direct outcome of these two Conventions and which Sri Lanka was privileged to host in Colombo, provides the logical mechanism for this purpose. It is your responsibility, as heads of Police in the SAARC Region, to demonstrate the necessary will and the commitment to make these operational at the earliest through the flow of information in areas of mutual interest.

"The regular meetings of SAARC Liaison under the Suppression of Terrorism Convention also provide a forum for regular interaction at the operational level. Mutual assistance in training of Police Officers within the region would enable all our countries to share the benefit of expertise of institutions and trained personnel within the region, having special regard to the need and priorities of our countries in South Asia.

"This meeting, therefore, is a significant step in this collective regional endeavour to address concerns affecting the security and stability of all our countries. It provides a unique opportunity to address the diverse and complex issues at the highest operational level and to work out strategies and programs which are best suited to our region.

"In conclusion, it is my wish that despite the important program of work before you, that you find the time to acquaint yourself with our country, its people, and our cultural traditions. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that tonight you will witness the world renowned Kandy Perahera and the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic. It is rich and colourful expression of the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka which we have preserved over the centuries and has survived to this date."

A.R. Keral, Additional Inspector General of Police, Nepal and Kewal Knshan, Police Headquarters, Nepal, R.K. Aryal, Senior Superintendent of Police Nepal, N. Silval, Superintendent of Police Nepal, Flight Lieutenant Hussain Sheker, Ahamed Nashid of Maldives, D.C. Patak, Director Intelligence Bureau, India, M.B. Kumar, Director General, Narcotic Bureau, India, A. Regmohan, Director General, Tamil Nadu, R.K. Nigran, Director General, West Bengal, Illyas Mohed Moshin, Secretary Ministry of Intelligence Security, M.A. Haque Inspector General of Police, Bangladesh, Shefeil Alan, and N. Silval of Bangladesh were among the foreign delegates.

Local delegates team led by Inspector General of Police W.B. Rajaguru was elected as the current chairman of the SAARC conference on Co-operation in Police matters.

Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, Supreme Court Judges, Court of Appeal Judges, senior officials of the Defence Ministry also participated.

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